DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 287 028 CE 048 476

AUTHOR Conrad, Dan; Hedin, Diane
TITLE Youth Service. A Guidebook for Developing and Operating Effective Programs.
INSTITUTION Independent Sector, Washington, DC.
SPONS AGENCY Atlantic Richfield Foundation, Los Angeles, CA.; Ford Foundation, New York, N.Y.; Hazen Foundation, New Haven, Conn.; New York Times Foundation, N.Y.; Rockefeller Foundation, New York, N.Y.; William Randolph Hearst Foundation, Los Angeles, Calif.
PUB DATE Jan 87
NOTE 72p.; Some pages are printed on colored paper.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Citizen Participation; Community Organizations; *Community Programs; Community Services; Compliance (Legal); Educational Resources; Guidelines; *Models; Postsecondary Education; *Program Development; Program Implementation; Public Service; Secondary Education; *Student Organizations; Student Recruitment; *Student Volunteers; Voluntary Agencies; Volunteer Training

ABSTRACT

This guidebook was developed to provide assistance to persons wishing to begin, expand, or promote programs of youth community service. It features examples of what young people already are doing and practical, down-to-earth ideas for designing, organizing, running, promoting, and supporting youth service programs. Special attention is given to school-based progams because that is where most of the young people are and where there are often the most difficult structural barriers to involvement. The first section, "What Youth Can Do," illustrates a number of ways in which youth can and do help in working with a variety of problems and populations. Next is a section entitled, "Program Models," outlining the ways in which community service can be integrated into the organizational structure of youth agencies and schools. The next five sections ("Setting up the Projects," "Developing Your Own Projects," "Recruitment," "Liability," and "Transportation") deal with the nuts-and-bolts issues of starting a program and keeping it running smoothly. The next section, on "Learning from Service," offers practical suggestions for helping young people maximize the learning opportunities in their service experiences. The final two sections, "Rationale" and "Closing Note," summarize the key reasons to be involved with community service. The document contains some suggested exercises for teachers and others working in this field, and sample administrative forms, a short bibliography, and a listing of youth service resources are included as appendixes. (KC)

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SECTOR

# YOUTH SERVICE

## A Guidebook for Developing and Operating Effective Programs

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

***"If this society is to produce adults who can function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens, then new structures and processes for socializing youth must be created within the framework of the school itself and in cooperation with other institutions serving young people." —The Authors***



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# YOUTH SERVICE

## A Guidebook for Developing and Operating Effective Programs

By Dan Conrad and Diane Hedin

Illustrations by Mark Conrad

INDEPENDENT
SECTOR

Published by INDEPENDENT SECTOR with funding from the Ford, ARCO, Rockefeller, Hearst, New York Times Company, and Edward W. Hazen Foundations.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS


Foreword . . . . . 5

Introduction . . . . . 7

What Youth Can Do . . . . . 9

Program Models . . . . . 14

Setting Up the Projects . . . . . 19

Developing Your Own Projects . . . . . 28

Recruitment . . . . . 32

Liability . . . . . 35

Transportation . . . . . 37

Learning from Service . . . . . 39

Evaluation . . . . . 46

Rationale: Selling the Youth Service Program . . . . . 50

A Closing Note: Relating Youth Service to the Needs of Society . . . . . 58

Appendix A: Needs and Tasks of Adolescence . . . . . 60

Appendix B: Aims and Outcomes of Youth Service Programs . . . . . 61

Appendix C: Resources . . . . . 62

Appendix D: References and Related Research . . . . . 63

Appendix E: Sample Administrative Forms . . . . . 64

INDEPENDENT SECTOR Task Force on School Curricula and Student Community Service . . . . . 71

# FOREWORD

Since its founding in 1980, INDEPENDENT SECTOR has been concerned with creating a national forum that encourages active citizenship and personal community service. Within that broad mission, one of the organization's concerns is putting this sector before young people—through school curricula and educational materials and by involving students as volunteers in their communities. That concern was addressed by INDEPENDENT SECTOR's Task Force on School Curricula and Student Community Service, chaired by Steven Minter, Director of the Cleveland Foundation (for a list of the Task Force members, see page 71).

Early in 1986, the Task Force developed a proposal for a Guidebook and Forum on student community service. The goal of the forum and guidebook project was twofold: 1) to provide an opportunity for persons working in the area of student community service to meet together to discuss common experiences and learn from one another; and, 2) to learn how to increase the number of schools and young people involved in community service.

Funding for the forum and guidebook was provided by the Ford, ARCO, Rockefeller, Hearst, New York Times Company, and Edward W. Hazen foundations. Educational consultants for the project were Diane Hedin of the University of Minnesota's Center for Youth Development and Research and Dan Conrad, community service program coordinator at Hopkins High School, Minnetonka, Minnesota.

Participants in the forum, held October 9, 1986, included: teachers, administrators and students from secondary schools with service programs; national staff, local program directors, and student volunteers from youth-serving agencies; national, state, and local education policy-makers; representatives of community volunteer bureaus; and representatives from corporations, foundations, and voluntary organizations. The program featured a lively discussion of the draft version of this guidebook. Many ideas offered by the participants were used by the authors in preparing this final version.

In publishing and distributing this book, INDEPENDENT SECTOR hopes to put practical information into the hands of school systems and organizations to increase involvement of young people. It is by developing their commitment as young people that we will have the best chance to assure the long-term goals of active citizenship and personal community service.

—Brian O'Connell
President
INDEPENDENT SECTOR
January 1987

# INTRODUCTION

A healthy society requires that its members help and care for one another, that they accept some measure of personal responsibility for the welfare of all others in their community. The idea is not new. Yet it is as crucial for the health of our modern society—and world—as it was for the first gatherings of humans into extended families and isolated woodland tribes. But because an idea is old and honored does not insure its being practiced. The most fundamental of our values must, like freedom itself, be nurtured, affirmed, and won again—and again, and again.

Today there is a new wave of urgent attention being paid to service, to private giving, to the contributions of the independent sector to the welfare of society. But as a new wave it is smashing against active countertrends of escapism, isolation, "looking out for number one," and a debilitating sense of powerlessness in the face of national and world crises.

We have a great stake in the outcome of this confrontation. Particularly we have a stake in young people believing they have power to change the world and being motivated to do so out of a deepened love and concern for others. We have a stake in their developing and testing their skills for effective citizen participation, and having the chance to act on their humanitarian ideals.

We have a stake in the agencies that serve and involve youth making central to their mission the formation and practice of the skills and values that will assure our survival into the 21st century. In short, we have a stake in a strengthened service ethic in our society.

We are not starting from scratch. We are not alone. Nearly all recent reports on the status of American education (including Ernest Boyer's *High School;* The Carnegie Report on Education and the Economy, *A Nation Prepared;* The Education Commission of the States' *Reconnecting Youth;* and John Goodlad's *A Place Called School*) have called for more opportunities for students to do community service as part of their high school curriculum.

Some states, several large city school systems, and many individual high schools (particularly private and parochial), either mandate or strongly recommend community service as a requirement for graduation. Hundreds of schools offer elective courses in community service and many times more that encourage service through school clubs and organizations. A recent survey of high schools found evidence of nearly a million students being enrolled in some kind of school-sponsored service program.

Virtually all major national youth organizations such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Girls and Boys Clubs, 4-H, Camp Fire, Red Cross, YWCA, and YMCA have promoted service by youth from their inception. The same is true of youth programs sponsored by national and local religious organizations.

Youth service corps have received increasing attention as another avenue of service for young people. There are now service corps for youth over 18 years of age in New York City and San Francisco and in ten states, with more programs under consideration.

Yet, something is missing in the above account. Evidence of young people providing service to others is available—but it doesn't exactly scream at you from your television set or morning newspaper. There, instead, are endless and dreary accounts of juvenile crime, teenage pregnancy, and dangerous levels of drug use. Major studies of adolescent life and attitudes provide heartwarming images of a yearning for a world of beauty, plenty, love, justice, and peace. They also present heartrending images of loneliness, self-destructiveness, idleness, self-absorption, anger, aimlessness, and a shattered sense of personal power to make things better.

While reports on education and youth policy have called for increased youth participation, those recommendations have been, at best, peripheral to the more publicized calls for frequent testing, stiffer academic standards, more uniform curricula, more highly qualified and paid teachers, and the like.

School administrators and directors of youth agencies cite involvement in service as a key organizational goal, but bemoan the more insistent pressures that often push it aside. These events and trends tell us the time is ripe for renewed efforts to support those who are working to involve youth in their communities and to encourage those who are considering doing so.

The purpose of this guidebook is to provide assistance to persons wishing to begin, expand, or promote programs of youth community service. It features examples of what young people already are doing, and practical, down-to-earth ideas on designing, organizing, running, promoting, and supporting youth service programs.

The ideas that follow should be of interest and value to all persons who have a stake in nurturing youth involvement. Special attention is given to school-based programs because that is where most of the young people are, and where there are often the most difficult structural barriers to involvement. In most cases, however, ideas useful in one setting can be adapted to fit another. We must learn from and support one another. The purpose of this guidebook is to help us do that.

We view the guidebook as a "how-to" manual or reference book, which you probably will not read from cover to cover. We hope that the topics covered address major issues and concerns facing those struggling to design and improve youth participation programs, and that you will find a specific idea or two to help solve the particular problem you face.



7

The first section, "What Youth Can Do," illustrates a number of ways in which youth can and do help in working with a variety of problems and populations. Next is a section entitled "Program Models," outlining the ways in which community service can be integrated into the organizational structure of youth agencies and schools.

The next five sections ("Setting Up the Projects," "Developing Your Own Projects," "Recruitment," "Liability," and "Transportation") deal with the nuts-and-bolts issues of starting a program and keeping it running smoothly. The section on "Learning from Service" offers practical suggestions for helping young people maximize the learning opportunities in their service experiences.

The final two sections, "Rationale" and "Closing Note," summarize the key reasons to be involved with community service. They are intended to help you "sell" the idea to others who must be convinced of the validity and value of this concept. Sample administrative forms, a short bibliography, and a listing of youth service resources are included as appendices.

# WHAT YOUTH CAN DO

There is virtually no limit to what young people can do, no social need they cannot at least do something about. With a broad enough perspective, it's hard to think of a positive social role teenagers have not at some time filled: from leading crusades, commanding armies, advising kings—*being* kings—to making scientific discoveries, composing symphonies, and exposing injustices.

What youth can do is limited more by social and political convention than by capacity, energy, or willingness. In modern American society the period of adolescence increasingly has become defined as a time of dependency and training, of preparation for entrance into the "real" world of adulthood. The twin notions of dependence and preparation influence how young people are treated—and what they are allowed and encouraged to do—in every specific role they occupy from student to part-time worker. It often is not much.

There are always exceptions, of course. There are settings in which young people do take on significant tasks and where their potential to play a more significant role can be detected.

The volunteer sector of the community is often such a setting. Here we see young people working on their own or with adults to alleviate social hurts and to eliminate their causes. Here we see adults who believe that youth can make a significant contribution. Here we often see organizations, administrators, teachers, and youth workers who acknowledge the capacity of youth to make strong contributions and play responsible roles, and who understand that their school's or agency's goals can better be met by engaging young people in the real challenges of life than by confining them to passive dependency. In their worldview a social studies student or scout or 4-H'r not only listens, sits, and obeys, but also questions, acts, and helps make the rules.

***"What youth can do is limited more by social and political convention than by capacity, energy or willingness."***

## It's Ten O'Clock. Do You Know Where Your Children Are?

What follows is a sampling, a tiny fraction of the kinds of things young people in these programs are doing every day in our country. It is presented in the form of a youth worker's daily record that is mythical but not atypical and not at all fictional. Every example depicts a very real event or project.

### Notes on a day of service

**7:00 a.m.** John knocks at room 814 of the senior citizen high-rise. He's risen a half-hour early today, as he has every day for the last month, to stop on the way to school to put drops in the eyes of an elderly woman suffering from glaucoma. She needs the drops daily, but cannot administer them herself due to arthritis. John's friend Ashley will perform the same service on her way home from school this afternoon.

**8:00 a.m.** Fifteen young men and women gather in the front yard of a badly weathered home. The elderly owner, still recovering from his third heart attack, is unable to paint it himself and cannot afford to have it done by professionals. But today several young people, under the guidance of an expert gardener from a nearby nursery, are trimming bushes and pruning trees, while others are scraping and priming the house itself with the help of two retired professional painters from Local #386. The job, except for some touch-up work, will be completed in one day—with time off for lunch provided by a carry-out restaurant where one of the young people works after school. The paint, and advice on color selection, has been



9

A PROJECT OF
CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL'S
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
PROGRAM



10

donated by a local decorating firm. A brightly colored, handmade sign stands near the street proclaiming: "A PROJECT OF CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL'S COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM."

**9:00 a.m.** Two young people are walking around a fourth-grade classroom monitoring the children's mock emergency calls on 911. They're called BATmen by the kids, for they are instructors of the Red Cross's Basic Aid Training (BAT) program: a six-session course in basic home survival skills for kids who often find themselves alone when they come home from school. The Red Cross developed the course and trains youth (or adult) volunteers in both content and teaching techniques. It was precisely this lesson in getting emergency help that last fall enabled one nine-year-old to save his grandfather's life when he fell down with a heart attack.

**10:00 a.m.** In classroom 408, a group of teenagers is involved in a heated discussion of whether a Mrs. Clark can be compensated for damage to belongings caused by a burst water pipe in her housing project apartment. The case is real, not a textbook example. She's the mother of a student in the school and her case has been taken on by the Consumer Action Service, a project of the school's Rights and Money class. The students conclude Mrs. Clark is entitled to about $1,000, though her own petition to the housing authority has been denied. They're considering what steps to take next—with confidence they will succeed. After all, they've taken on 50 cases and "won" 75 percent of them, cases involving Dobermans, rental deposits, automobile repairs, purchase agreements, insurance claims and defective shampooers. (P.S. They eventually will win partial compensation for Mrs. Clark's loss.)

**11:00 a.m.** Troy and Angela sit in a corner of the Resource Center with Chao and Thanh-ha. The latter are not long removed from refugee camps near the Cambodian border. The former are peer tutors in the English as a Second Language (ESL) program at the school. They come here every day during their fifth period. Each ESL student who desires it (100 percent this year) is assigned a peer tutor, who invariably also becomes an advocate and friend.

***"[In] the volunteer sector of the community, . . . we often see organizations, administrators, teachers, and youth workers who acknowledge the capacity of youth to make strong contributions and play responsible roles."***

**Noon** Three pairs of young people pull up in automobiles at the Senior Citizen Center's drop-off point to pick up their day's allotment of Meals on Wheels, which they will deliver to shut-ins in their part of town. Twice each week they use their lunch period and a free hour to do this. They barely have time to deliver all the meals before they're expected back in class, so on more than a few occasions they've returned to the elderly people's homes after school or on weekends to do other chores, or just to chat.

**1:00 p.m.** Students in the government class are meeting with the mayor and a councilman today. They are going over a list of projects the city council is considering for this year—from building a municipal swimming pool to reprogramming the parking meters on Main Street. The students have been studying both local government and survey research, and will be taking the project list to a stratified sample of residents to poll them on their priorities. The data will be analyzed by the students and presented at the first council meeting next month. The results will be a critical factor, as they have been for the past five years, in determining the Council's plans for the next fiscal year.

**2:00 p.m.** Three young men in the wood shop are rebuilding and drastically modifying skateboards. On a class visit to a day school for severely handicapped children, they noted the children's restricted possibilities for independent movement and autonomous play. An avid skateboarder among the visitors wondered whether any of the kids could move their arms enough to propel themselves along the floor while lying on a low board with wheels. It seemed possible to the staff. The young men put out an urgent call for broken or dust-gathering boards. They got a bunch,

and now are dismantling them and adding width, padding, chin rests and straps.

**2:30 p.m.** The school day ends, but service by youth does not—though it is now more often under the auspices of some other youth agency.

**3:00 p.m.** Older members of a Camp Fire group take their regular weekly turn as phone counselors at the bank of telephones assigned to the Phone-A-Friend program. This is a service geared to elementary age children who find themselves home alone and/or lonely in the hours after school. The teenagers talk to the youngsters, who call on every topic imaginable from fears of an abusive neighbor to general chitchat about cosmetics and sports.

**4:00 p.m.** Three members of the Bike Patrol, a 4-H project in cooperation with the State Department of Public Safety and the local police, are cruising the streets of their town on 10-speeds. They have the right to issue citations to bikers who violate safety rules. They also give pointers and advice to children about how to ride more safely. They will conduct a bike rodeo later in the afternoon to help elementary-school children improve their skills and learn about the rules of the road.

**5:00 p.m.** A group of Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts have gotten together and are running, jumping, yelling, and throwing things in an open field. They are the junior leaders for troops of mentally retarded youngsters and are putting them through their last day of preparation for Saturday's long-awaited Special Olympics competitions.

***"It's hard to think of a positive social role teenagers have not at some time filled."***

**6:00 p.m.** A combined training and strategy session is under way at the state office of Ground Zero, an organization dedicated to educating people about the threat of nuclear war and what can be done about it. Most of the volunteers are teenagers. They not only answer phones and stuff envelopes, but one has developed a sophisticated computer program to organize the mailing list, as well. Others have worked on revising a simulation of an international crisis, made a "rock video" promoting peace, hosted visiting students from the Soviet Union, helped develop curriculum materials on issues of war and peace, and more. Increasingly, the expert speakers that the organization has sent to schools and youth groups to talk on the nuclear crisis have been (extensively trained) young people themselves.

**7:00 p.m.** Members of the Future Homemakers of America are leading a discussion on birth defects with teenage mothers who have gathered for this purpose at a teen clinic.

**8:00 p.m.** Two members of the Boys Club are going door to door in their central city neighborhood offering to do free blood pressure exams. The club's campaign to alert people to the dangers of hypertension has been well publicized in the local media, so citizens are happy to open their doors to the young men. The project has been credited as a lifesaver for two elderly people whose previously undiagnosed high blood pressure was severe enough to require immediate hospitalization following the volunteers' visit.

**9:00 p.m.** At the Bridge, a shelter for runaway youth, one high school student is sitting by the phone and two others are joining in on a group session with kids who have come to the shelter in the last two days. Not much—and sometimes not at all—older than the runaways themselves, they are valued volunteers. They have the natural advantage of being close to the age of the troubled youth, and the further advantage of skills gained through the YWCA's peer-counseling program.

**10:00 p.m.** Cans of meat, fruit, and vegetables are piling up at the entrance to the after-game dance at the high school. Tonight's dance is sponsored by the Key Club at the school, and admission includes a donation of food for local needy.

**11:00 p.m.** Four young men and women wearing light green smocks

over their clothes are reviewing the admission procedures for the emergency room at City Hospital. They are all members of an Explorers Medical Post. Tonight, and for the next several weeks, they will be assisting the emergency medical staff on the Friday night shift.

**Midnight** In several neighborhoods throughout the city the streets are being patrolled by young men and women in T-shirts and red berets, members of a local version of New York's Guardian Angels. Unarmed, but trained in self-defense and emergency procedures, they travel in teams in high-crime areas. Their special emphasis in this town is to offer additional security in areas where senior citizens and/or younger children may be out at night. At first they were cautiously, even begrudgingly, accepted by the police, but their own behavior and the response of local residents have changed this relationship into a real partnership. This being a weekend night, they'll be on duty for several more hours.

We could go on and on. The examples could have been more dramatic: of young people saving their town from an onrushing flood, or taking over their community's newspaper when the commercial venture folded, and so forth. But these are the more typical, the more accessible. The point, after all, is not that kids can do great things. That we know already—or will after reading the many other examples that appear in this booklet.

What is bigger news right now is that these and a vast variety of other things are being accomplished by young people acting, in large degree, in their capacities as students or as members of a youth agency—or both. The essential purpose of this booklet is to explore and share ideas of how to engage more youth in such activities and how to strengthen programs that already encourage such activity.

*"The point. . . is not that kids can do great things. . . . what is bigger news. . . is that these and a vast variety of other things are being accomplished by young people acting in their capacities as students or as members of a youth agency."*



13

# PROGRAM MODELS

## Community Service in Youth Organizations

This section addresses the ways in which community service can be made to fit into the organizational structure of a school or youth agency. We begin with youth-serving agencies, since they face fewer barriers.

First, community service is compatible with responsible citizenship, a central mission of many of them. These agencies want their members to see themselves as part of the human community and to develop the capacity to care for and care about others. For some organizations, citizenship education remains the main goal. For others, a focus on personal growth and development has almost eclipsed the service ethic. But for nearly all youth-serving programs, there is a tradition of and commitment to devoting some attention and resources to community service.

*"Staff of youth agencies typically can identify both an organizational mandate and a programmatic structure for doing community service."*

Second, a structure already exists in many youth organizations and clubs for allowing participants to do service. For example, in the Red Cross youth program, involving youth in community service is the organization's central activity, permeating all aspects of programming. Similarly, the Boy Scouts encourage boys at all levels of the organization to perform some daily act of service to others as part of their basic commitment as Scouts.

In other organizations, such as 4-H, Boys Clubs, Girl Scouts, and the Congressional Award program, students are required to complete a certain number of hours of service to earn awards, badges, ribbons, or other forms of recognition.

In some of these traditional youth-serving organizations, service activities are performed sporadically, as "events" at a district, council, or county level. Nevertheless, staff of youth agencies typically can identify both an organizational mandate and a programmatic structure for doing community service activities.

Third, since youth agencies usually are not constrained by the rigidities of a six- or seven-period school day, they often have more options as to where and when they provide service. This is especially valuable for projects requiring large blocks of time to complete, or which demand the use of evening or weekend hours, or which are cooperative ventures with adult volunteers.

## School-Based Programs

Incorporating community service into the school is often more complex and challenging. Therefore, we are devoting more detail to the way in which schools around the country have achieved this goal. One way of distinguishing among types of school-based programs is to examine how closely they are integrated into the regular academic program of a school. The continuum below represents a movement from least integration into the school curriculum on the left to most on the right. Distinctions between programs are based on their structure, not their merit.

| Club or Co-curricular Activity | Volunteer Clearing-house | Community Service Credit | "Lab" for Existing Courses | Community Service Class | School-wide Focus or Theme |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

*"This may be the purest form of service, since the activities are strictly voluntary . . . "*

1. ***Club or Co-curricular Activity.*** Schools are the most likely to offer this type of program in which students perform community service through joining an after-school club or co-curricular activity. About 15 percent of all high schools in the United States report having this option.

In one sense, this may be the purest form of service, since the activities are strictly voluntary with students receiving neither academic credit nor time off from school. But the lack of incentives beyond the intrinsic value of serving others means also that the population of those who participate is a rather narrow one: mostly those who already possess a service ethic.

There are certain clubs that nearly always incorporate community service into their programs. These include such organizations as the Future Homemakers of America, which frequently sponsors peer education around family issues such as pregnancy prevention; National Honor Society chapters, which often require their members to participate in some school-related service such as teaching, tutoring, or collecting books for school libraries; and Key Clubs, whose main service activity is helping the needy.

Typically, the school provides a faculty adviser—sometimes paid, sometimes volunteer—to guide the students. In one large city school system, a staff person attached to the central administrative office works full time to help students and school staff establish after-school clubs and programs in individual high schools so that a city-wide emphasis on serving the community can become a reality.

That approach is atypical though, and most school districts provide only minimal resources to this type of community service program. The plus side of this arrangement is that students often carry significant responsibility for making the programs happen, and in this way leadership skills among the youth members are developed.

2. ***Volunteer Clearinghouse.*** Some schools have created a "volunteer bureau" to serve as a central clearinghouse for a number of school-community interactions, including volunteer service. This is a more comprehensive approach than the first in that students can learn about a wide array of involvement opportunities within the wider community, which may include voluntary clubs in the school but certainly are not limited to these.

*"... a more comprehensive approach ... in that students can learn about a wide array of involvement opportunities within the wider community ..."*

Just as in voluntary clubs, students receive no academic credit for their service. The work may be done during the student's unscheduled time or during a study hall, especially if it can be placed near lunch or at the end of the school day.

Students with time and interest come to the bureau to obtain information about service opportunities. If they find a suitable placement, they check it out personally and then sign a "contract" to carry out the volunteer service. Follow-up and review often are carried on by both the students and faculty members of the volunteer bureau.

In one school a Department of Community Involvement, staffed by students and faculty, developed a central resource list by employing students during the summer to investigate opportunities. During the school year, students staff the department, along with a regular faculty member who serves primarily as a supervisor to the student staff.

In other schools, the office is staffed by a non-school employee—someone from a Voluntary Action Center or from organizations which promote community service such as the Junior League, Red Cross, or Jaycees.

3. ***Community Service Credit.*** Here, community service not only is facilitated and encouraged by the school, but also is accredited. Often a community service credit is given for an established number of hours. (For example, 100 hours equals one semester credit.) In some schools, students are required to perform a specific number of hours of volunteer service in order to graduate. In others, they are awarded elective credit and in some cases these credits may be used in lieu of some other credit, such as social studies or humanities.

A common procedure is for a student to prepare a proposal outlining what he or she wants to do, for how long, for what purposes, and what

*"The key point . . . is that the community service . . . is essentially an off campus experience with minimal supervision by school personnel . . . The learning is seen as being in the doing."*

product is to be produced. This proposal is reviewed by a faculty adviser or program coordinator. If approved, the student acts on the proposal in the time blocked out.

For some, it may be one full school day a week; for others it may be after school; and in some cases, students may be given from a month to a semester away from school to complete their service projects. In structure, this model is very similar to the various independent study options available on most college and some high school campuses.

The key point as far as our continuum is concerned, however, is that the community service is not performed within the context of a regular school course. It is essentially an off-campus experience with minimal supervision by school personnel. There may be an occasional discussion with an adviser and/or other participants, but the learning is seen as being in the doing.

Formal training of students is the responsibility of the receiving agency. The role of the faculty adviser is to check occasionally on the student's progress and provide an opportunity to talk about what he or she is doing and learning.

4. ***A Laboratory for an Existing Course.*** This kind of program has enabled many schools to introduce community service into their academic program with little or no immediate change in curriculum, school structure, or staff deployment.

In this model, students in existing courses do community service as a way to "reality test" course content, gather data and examples, and make use of what is learned in the class. In a social problems course, for example, students might read about the growing gap between rich and poor in America, but gain personal insight into this phenomenon by volunteering in a program for the homeless, providing child care in a deprived neighborhood, or painting the home of a person too poor to do it himself.

**"In a social problems course, students might read about the growing gap between rich and poor . . . but gain personal insight . . . by volunteering in a program for the homeless."**

A typical time requirement is two hours per week of community service during the quarter or semester, which can be performed during school hours or after school depending on the student's schedule and agency needs. This often is done in lieu of some other requirement, such as a research paper.

Generally, the classroom teacher is responsible for helping students find appropriate off-campus experiences and for the general supervision of students. In one school, a student involvement office staffed by students who do this as their community assignment, identifies service opportunities and helps match students to experiences. In another school, a community fair is held early in the year, where community agencies desiring student assistance set up tables or booths and students shop around for a placement that interests them and meets their time and transportation restrictions.

It is important to note that even though this procedure does not require curriculum changes, the practical consequence of including an involvement component may be a gradual altering of topics and approaches to coincide with the kinds of experiences students are having. A healthy pressure develops to provide more practically useful information and more techniques for integrating the rich but varied data gathered through the community experiences.

5. ***Community Service Class.*** This model, found in approximately seven percent of U.S. high schools, represents an attempt to combine the strongest features of the previous two into a course which exists as an integral part of the school's academic program.

Here the community experience forms the heart and is the central focus of the course, but it is combined with an ongoing classroom experience where the emphasis is on providing information, skills, and generalizing principles to assist students directly in interpreting their experiences to operate more successfully in their placements.

There is a strong assumption in this model that whereas experience *can* be educational, it is neither necessarily nor automatically so. This approach assumes that it is the role of the teacher to help make community service educational.

*"There is a strong assumption in this model that whereas experience can be educational, it is neither necessarily nor automatically so."*

A typical example would be a one-semester social studies class meeting two hours per day. Students spend four days (eight hours) in the field and one day (two hours) in class.

The additional hours per day (for teacher and student) are gained by giving the student double social studies credit or an additional elective credit by making the course multidisciplinary. The most typical combinations involve English, home economics, humanities, and social studies. In parochial schools, community service often is done in the context of a religion class, where students are able to apply moral teaching to real hardship and suffering.

A two-hour time block for such a course is ideal, allowing students to have enough time at their field site to make a real contribution, and lessening or eliminating the need for extra staff, students missing other classes, and so forth.

6. ***Community Service as a School-wide Focus or Theme.*** A rare, but highly desirable, approach is for community service to permeate a school's curriculum. In one large city system, a special magnet school on the human services has been created in which all students are in field placements in human service agencies. Their volunteer work has two purposes: career exploration and preparation and the development of social responsibility.

In a parochial school, service to others is woven into many courses and serves as an organizing principle for the total academic program. For example, biology students work in a food co-op, where they teach nutrition to low-income elderly people; home economics students run a day-care center several mornings a week for neighborhood preschoolers; and advanced math students offer their computer skills to small businesses to manage inventories and do financial projections.

*"In this model, community service . . . is viewed as a key organizational principle which affects all students."*

In all these examples, the students are practicing "the humane application of knowledge." In this model, community service is not just for the selected few motivated students who choose to become community service providers, but rather is viewed as a key organizational principle which affects all students.

## Collaborative Models

While either schools or youth agencies can offer high-quality volunteer service programs for teenagers, neither can do the job as well alone as they can when these and other organizations concerned with volunteerism work together. Though there are only a limited number of examples of collaboration among schools, youth organizations, Voluntary Action Centers, and adult civic organizations such as Rotary or the Junior League, those that do exist are noteworthy.

In several communities, staff members of the Voluntary Action Center or some clearinghouse on volunteer opportunities work directly with the high school student volunteer program. The program works efficiently because the teachers or school counselors concentrate on what they do best—recruiting, motivating, teaching, and supporting students in their work in the community—while the person from the volunteer clearinghouse brings expertise in training community service providers, matching students to appropriate field sites, and knowing the community agencies and their needs. As one director of a Voluntary Action Center said: "We're just like Willy Sutton. He said he robbed banks 'cause that's where the money is. Well, we're in the schools, 'cause that's where the young volunteers are."

A national program in which Junior League volunteers work with



17

teams of high school students to help them design community projects is another example of effective use of talents and resources. Four students from a school, along with a teacher or counselor and a Junior Leaguer, form the Project LEAD team.

The Junior League volunteer, because of her knowledge of the community and experience in volunteerism, helps students launch new projects or become involved in existing League or other community programs.

The youth members' expertise lies in knowing their peers and designing strategies to recruit them into community service efforts.

The teacher knows how to connect the project to the ongoing structure of the school, helping the students receive credit for their work, integrating their volunteer experience with the academic program, and so on.

In other cases, a youth organization and a school have joined to develop and operate community service programs. In one city, the Red Cross needed people to teach a basic first-aid course for fourth graders and also felt pressure to increase the number of teen members in the organization.

The youth director of that agency set up a program with a high school in which the members of a community service course became Red Cross volunteers who spent six hours each week teaching basic first aid.

Both the teacher and the youth director benefited. The teacher was able to place students in high quality volunteer experiences with a minimum of effort, since the Red Cross staff member trained, monitored, and transported the students. The youth director solved her twin problems of low teen membership and not enough volunteers to fill requests for the first-aid course.

# SETTING UP THE PROJECTS

People often ask the youth service equivalent of the "chicken or egg" question. They want to know if a service program should start by identifying the things to be done, or whether a cadre of youth volunteers should be recruited before community needs are specified. Either might be right under certain circumstances—or be dictated by them.

If you have a choice, however, it is generally best to begin by finding the projects. People of all ages are more likely to respond to a request to do some specific task, and nothing will dampen the spirit of a group of volunteers more thoroughly than a long delay between their offer to help and the chance to begin.

It is not necessary, nor even desirable, that every possible project be identified and every task minutely defined. Just enough to begin is usually sufficient. There always should be the possibility for young people to discover and develop new projects, to respond to new requests, and to redesign tasks.

There are essentially only two ways to get started in community service: join existing efforts or start projects of your own. The former approach is by far the most common form of youth service, and the easiest way to start.

*"Nothing will dampen the spirit of a group of volunteers more thoroughly than a long delay between their offer to help and the chance to begin."*



19

# Working With Existing Programs and Projects

## Locating Agencies and Programs

*"There are people and organizations whose job is to know community needs and resources."*

Developing a catalog of existing service agencies and projects is an invaluable accomplishment. The task is not so difficult in terms of skills required, but it can be incredibly time consuming. Fortunately, there are people and organizations whose job is to know community needs and resources. The following list tells you where to start and suggests ways to make the task manageable.

***Your own contacts.*** Your brother-in-law is a city attorney and wouldn't dare refuse your request that he take on an intern; you meet the director of the mental health center at a party and she's willing to have your young people visit or volunteer in her agency; a student's mother helps in the Meals on Wheels program . . . and on and on. Let everyone know what you are doing: your minister, your cousin, your city council member, mailman, taxi driver, and next-door neighbor. These are your most valuable resources. Not only might they have ideas, but they also can offer a personal entree to an agency or program.

***Tour the immediate neighborhood.*** If time and transportation are constraints, and they almost always are, chart the schools, businesses, human service agencies, day-care homes, etc. within reasonable distance.

The zoning and planning department of the city or county may be able to donate a large-scale map of the area on which you can indicate potential or confirmed project sites. Such a map is a good resource, both for its practical value in keeping track of volunteers and for its symbolic and public relations value of graphically depicting the scope of activity generated by the program.

In one large city school where service was to be a central focus of the curriculum, the first project of the year was to divide the community around the school into 20 subsections, indicate these on copies of the city map, and send teams of students to chart potential service projects and sites in each subsection.

The students were trained to present themselves to people in agencies and told to keep a watchful eye for other community problems that might be a focus for a student-designed service project.

Having students do the surveying has drawbacks, but these are outweighed by the value of acquainting youth with the community and demonstrating to those visited that the young people are capable and eager to become involved.

***Volunteer Bureau.*** Most communities have an agency whose major professional responsibility is cataloging opportunities for service and recruiting volunteers. The name of such an organization is likely to be something similar to "Voluntary Action Center." At minimum, this volunteer bureau should be able to supply a current list of requests for volunteers.

*"Most communities have an agency whose major responsibility is cataloging opportunities for service and recruiting volunteers."*

Often, however, these assignments (and the expertise of people in the bureau) are geared to the time, talents, and interests of adults. It may take some work on your part to encourage the bureau to channel some of its information and expertise to meet the needs of younger volunteers. There usually is interest, however, and some volunteer bureaus even have assigned a staff person to work with schools and youth agencies to match young people to volunteer slots.

***Printed directories.*** Most communities have a directory of community agencies and organizations. If there is a Voluntary Action Center, it often has a directory that includes information on the kinds of volunteer jobs available in each agency.

Other sources of useful directories would include city hall, the county health and welfare council, or the United Way. Public libraries also

are an invaluable resource. Many directories are available in their reference collections, and libraries often maintain their own lists of community organizations, as well.

Hotline operators, social workers, police, and others who must make referrals may be willing to share their informal files with you. The telephone company's yellow pages also can be a valuable source of ideas, particularly in larger cities where listings of agencies like nursing homes and day-care centers are grouped by location.

***Human service networks and associations.*** Other important sources of information on agencies and ongoing projects are the various umbrella organizations associated with specific areas of social service such as a state association of retarded citizens, council on aging, day-care association, or mental health associations. The actual names vary in each community, but you can always find them—often in the yellow pages of the phone directory. Also, be sure your contacts include any senior citizen centers in the community.

***Service clubs, civic and religious organizations.*** Groups such as the League of Women Voters, Rotary and Lions Clubs, Junior League, and Chamber of Commerce often have projects that young people can work on. They may even be enlisted to help young people with *their* projects, or help you develop a list of service opportunities.

Likewise, many churches and synagogues have active service programs and often are a good place to go to find out about individual people who need assistance. In larger communities there also will be umbrella organizations such as a Jewish community center, Catholic charities program, or inter-church association that operate programs themselves and know about others.

***Mayor, city manager, county extension agent, social worker.*** The job of many public employees is to know their community's vital needs. One teacher went to the city manager and asked what his students could do for the city. The next day he was handed a list of 47 projects. You may not be so lucky, but it is certainly worth a try. At the least you will spread information about your program and get the name of someone else you can contact.

***"Many churches and synagogues have active service programs and often are a good place to go to find out about individual people who need assistance."***

***Newspapers, other media.*** The most thorough community directory and best-informed community organizer never will have all the information and always will be a little out of date. Check the newspaper and TV for information about new projects starting, new directors of agencies, volunteer needs, and the like.

Neighborhood newspapers or newsletters often are the best source. Get to know someone from the paper, making them one of your scouts (and later a publicity agent for your service project). Stories of local events actually may be a source of project ideas. (See page 30.)

## Contacting Agencies and Programs

***Who to contact*** can be a major strategic decision. Do you go straight to the top and see the "boss," or is it better to start farther down the hierarchy? If you approach the wrong person you will waste a lot of time, at best ("great idea, but I can't give the go-ahead, you'll have to see so-and-so. . . ."), and at worst you may ruin the chances to serve in a place where there's a lot to do and people who want you there ("I don't see how it could work here, but I'll talk to my assistant and get back to you. Have a nice day.").

***"If you know anyone in an organization, talk to them first, wherever they are in the hierarchy."***

There are no hard-and-fast rules about what is best except, perhaps, one: if you know *anyone* in an organization, talk to them first *wherever* they are in the hierarchy. At some point or other you'll need to talk to the person in charge (or the head of some division such as the volunteer coordinator in a large hospital), but by then you'll know what to expect, and be able to be more specific about how you can be useful to the organization.

If you must go in "cold" and you sense some hesitancy to involve young volunteers, you might downplay your interest in a long-term relationship and focus on arranging a visit or tour for your group. Such a visit would help build a relationship, show what good folks you are, give the chance to meet other staff people, and allow people in the group to scout out where they may be of assistance.

***What to tell them*** is the next major thing to decide. A point to make in the first few minutes is that your aim is to find ways that young people can help them do *their* job better—that whatever other aims you may have are secondary and depend on the tasks being real and significant. You may try saying something like the following:

> *"Our aim is to be of real help to* you, *not to have you help make* my *job easier. If we are not really helping you, then the experience is not real and will be of little use to you or us. In fact, that might be a good way to gauge how well things are working: if at any time our presence seems to cause more bother than benefit we should immediately rethink our role or forget the whole idea."*

Beyond such assurances you will want to convey (not necessarily all at once):

- the overall aims of your program;
- the number and types of young volunteers you could imagine being involved;
- what times and days they are available and for how long a stretch;
- what level of supervision you'll provide and expect the agency or program to give;
- what demands the agency can make and what level of responsibility they can expect from the young people;
- what types of work are appropriate;
- what kinds of skills the young people bring to their volunteer service; and
- what the volunteers hope to get out of the experience.

The single most important thing to try to establish is that the tasks assigned or thought up by the volunteers be significant and challenging. One veteran of youth service pointed out: "When I hear that one of my kids is not showing up, or is chronically late, or fools around, it won't be because he's bad, or irresponsible, or the job is too tough. I absolutely guarantee you it will be because he thinks he's not doing anything useful and isn't really needed. He may be wrong, but that's what he'll think."

*"The single most important thing . . . is that the tasks be significant and challenging."*

It will be most helpful if you can leave a written description of your program and an outline of the things the agency can expect of the young people and what is expected from the agency, in turn. You also may wish to develop an individual volunteer contract that spells out some of these things. A sample is included on page 65.

## Starting from the Skills and Interests of Youth

So far we have been suggesting ways of finding volunteer placements and projects in which to fit young people. This is usually the best way to proceed, but inevitably begs two important questions: how to guarantee that youth are engaged in appropriate projects in an agency or community program, and how to insure that you have the right people for the job. These questions could be answered by reversing the process just described and:

1. Finding skills and interests among group members,
2. Building project ideas, and
3. Contacting agencies with a catalog of things you're able to contribute.

Whether you start this way or by contacting agencies, it is a process to use soon after you have the group together. It will allow you to place students more intelligently, suggest new project ideas, allow young people to act on their strengths, and help insure that agencies will take advantage of the volunteers' fresh perspective and unique talents.

A typical way this process would proceed is as follows:

1. ***Finding skills and interests:***
   - a member of the group works in a bicycle repair shop

2. ***Building project ideas:***
   - running bike repair clinics in an elementary school
   - teaching bike mechanics to group(s) of children
   - using the skill in a "big brother" relationship
   - using general mechanical ability in an agency

3. ***Contacting agencies with the idea***
   - your neighborhood elementary school would like your group to do two of these projects

This, incidentally, is a real example. The young person had been unable to find a placement and was going to drop the community service program. He ended up organizing "Spring Bike Prep Days" in two elementary schools (where children rode their bikes to school and got tune-ups and basic maintenance information); and ran a six-week program on bike repair for a group of sixth-grade "troublemakers" (like himself).

One difficulty in this approach can be in helping young people recognize the skills they actually possess and seeing how these might be useful to others in the community. One way to get past this is suggested by the exercise outlined on the next page.

# EXERCISE

## Uncovering Individual Talents and Group Resources

This activity is designed to help young people assess what it is they have to offer, both individually and as a group. Its purposes are to: 1) *provide practice in being on both sides of a personal interview;* 2) *provide clearer focus for a program* when its exact nature is only generally defined (e.g. "do something about drug abuse," "beautify the neighborhood," or "help little kids"); 3) *define for each person how his or her knowledge and skills are magnified when combined with those of the group;* and 4) *help build group identity.*

Follow these steps:

1. **Interview.** Divide into groups of three. In turn, two members interview the third about interests, skills, and whatever else may be useful in the program—from why he or she signed up for the program to whether the person has access to a car. Each interviewer should take careful notes. These will be checked by the person interviewed before being handed in.

NOTE: These need to be probing, even "pushy" interviews to be productive. People fear being seen as braggarts even more than appearing incompetent, so it's usually necessary to probe for something like "interests" first. It also helps if the leader models the process beforehand by interviewing one of the group members.

2. **Report.** Have each member of each subgroup report to the whole group what they have learned.

3. **Develop a group profile.** As interests and skills, etc., are named, write them on a blackboard. When everyone is done, you will have a profile of what the group as a whole has to offer the community. Emphasize that, to the degree the individuals become a unit, each person has not only his or her own skills to work with, but all the resources listed.

4. **Brainstorm project ideas.** If the program's focus is fairly well defined at this point, go through the list and brainstorm how each of the attributes listed (from "patience" to "video game wizard") could be turned into a project or contribute to the general welfare of the group itself.

5. **Summarize your assets.** Conclude the exercise by writing a resume or advertisement proclaiming the qualities of the group.

NOTE: If your group is part of a larger organization (as would be the case with a school group or 4-H club), you might add the further step of including other resources to which the group has access: school choir, retreat center, camping equipment, and experts such as teachers or extension agents, for example. You might also want to list knowledge and talents that group members feel they could call on from friends, parents, etc.

# EXERCISE FOR TEACHERS

## Matching Youth with Community Needs *

* *This exercise is adapted from one presented in a workshop of the Community Service Volunteers (CSV) program in London, England. See Resources Section.*

You are responsible for organizing community service in your high school. You want to involve the following six adolescents in some kind of project. You arrange a series of visits to a hospital, a school for mentally retarded adolescents, an elementary school, a social worker responsible for services to the elderly, a psychiatric hospital, and the mayor of your town. You hope these visits will stimulate interest in the young people. Here are the students and their reactions to the visits:

### 1. Peter Smith

Sixteen years old in 11th grade. Reading ability is poor and is not particularly intelligent. Likes to work on his car but is far from a master mechanic. Can cause a lot of trouble in school when he wants to and his main interest is hanging around with a gang of friends, frequently getting into trouble. On Fridays, goes with his friends to watch his high school football game. When they're playing away, feels quite lost, with nothing to do. Doesn't have a lot of ability in athletics himself. Enjoys pop music. The visits made him feel he'd like to help but he doesn't want to be bossed around and told what to do.

### 2. Alan Evans

Seventeen years old, a gifted science student. Very intelligent. Involved in intensive academic work, almost non-stop, with lots of homework. Feels the government makes adequate provision for the poor and needy, so there is no need for the individual to do anything. Regards those few of his peers who visit old people as "sappy" and the activity "boring."

Member of the school chess team, and plays the violin in the school orchestra. He was somewhat shocked by some of the things he saw on the visits, but feels more inclined to explain them away than to do something about them.

### 3. Diana Williams

Fourteen years old. Always cheerful, has a pleasant, outgoing nature. Likes cooking, sewing, and knitting. Very much an "outdoor" girl, likes running, is a cheerleader. Her only remaining grandparent died two years ago. Thinks there doesn't really seem to be much to do for people of her age after school and on vacations. She doesn't understand a lot of the things she saw on the visits, but is willing to try almost anything.

### 4. Grace Carver

Fifteen years old, of average intelligence in 10th grade. Has been thinking a lot about a future career and feels drawn toward elementary teaching or nursing. Favorite subject is English, particularly literature. Likes pop music. Is a member of the drama club and has been in several school plays. The visits made her feel she "ought" to be helping others.

### 5. Jean Green

Seventeen years old, and a senior. Spare time interest is pottery. She was deeply moved by what she saw on the visits and would like to help any way that she can.

### 6. Colin Ritchie

Eighteen years old and in his last year at school. An "A" student and a great athlete, highly popular in the school. Favorite sports are badminton and volleyball, though he also is very able at just about everything, captaining the baseball team, as well as playing on the basketball team. His favorite course is physical education. He soon forgot about the visits.

The people whom you and the students met on these visits were:

### 1. Mrs. Hayden, Head Nurse

In charge of the maternity ward at the hospital, a spacious new building, with a generous allowance for employing nurse's aides, jobs which were quickly snapped up. Prides herself on a well-run ward. Definitely "anti-

volunteer" and needs a lot of convincing. She knows the head nurses of the other wings in the hospital, who share her attitude and pride.

Visiting times in all hospital wards are evenings (spouses only) and afternoons, with no children under 11 allowed except on Sunday afternoons. Husbands have frequently complained about this rule, especially in the maternity ward!

## 2. Mr. Black, Director of a School for Retarded Teens

Fairly open-minded attitude. Willing to have students come to do some community service work, but needs suggestions on what they can do. Has a "very good" staff, and doesn't want them disturbed from their routine. Noted that his staff have more trouble finding things for the boys to do than for the girls.

## 3. Mr. Long, Elementary School Principal

Is concerned about the fact that quite a few students leave with poor reading ability. Some of the classes are very large. Has no facilities or staff at his school for home economics, art, or languages, and physical education is rather inadequately taught (though not for lack of trying on the part of his staff).

## 4. Mrs. Letchford, Volunteer Director of a Psychiatric Hospital

Very interested in having volunteers, but wants them to be over 17, as the work is difficult and demanding.

## 5. Miss Sykes, County Social Worker

Regards problem families as an inappropriate place for volunteers. Notes that there are lots of old people for whom there is a Meals on Wheels service on weekdays. Also mentions that there are two lunch clubs—one at the day center for the physically handicapped and the other at a training school for mentally handicapped adolescents (where the Director is Mr. Black).

## 6. Mr. Davis, Mayor

A worried man. Gets a lot of complaints about the poor state of local public trails, the polluted condition of the local creek, and the lack of play facilities and open spaces.

Below is a blank grid, students down the side, professionals along the top. Try your skill in "project finding" by writing down in the appropriate box what each student could do in each site. Aim to fill as many boxes as possible: 30 or more boxes filled is good going.

| | Mrs. Hayden | Mr. Black | Mr. Long | Mrs. Letchford | Miss Sykes | Mr. Davis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Peter Smith | | | | | | |
| Alan Evans | | | | | | |
| Diana Williams | | | | | | |
| Grace Carver | | | | | | |
| Jean Green | | | | | | |
| Colin Ritchie | | | | | | |

# DEVELOPING YOUR OWN PROJECTS

There are times when the best way to organize a service program is to have the volunteers discover community needs for themselves and devise their own means of meeting them. In some rural and suburban areas there may not be enough agencies to absorb all the volunteers, the volunteer program may not be structured to provide the kind of long-term assistance desired by most agencies, or the leader may be looking for a way to supplement or go beyond the kinds of experiences available through agencies.

Two ways to discover opportunities for independent projects are to conduct your own community survey or to use the newspaper as a source of ideas.

## Community Survey

***"A survey always should have the aim of being acted upon."***

The best surveys are the ones that have a *simple aim,* and therefore are limited to looking a *single issue* or suspected problem. Grand surveys that seek both to cover enormous geographical areas and to ask a wide range of questions are not worth attempting. Go for small surveys that look at one possible area of need, that can be done quickly, and that can easily be devised, completed, interpreted, and acted upon.

Most importantly, *a survey always should have the aim of being acted upon.* That is what distinguishes the community service survey from traffic surveys, general needs assessments, and so on which tend to end at interpretation.

There are three purposes for conducting community surveys, each calling for a different research strategy. Brief descriptions of these follow. This section draws on suggestions from a handbook on service published by Community Service Volunteers (CSV), London, England. (See Resources Section.)

### Discovering Needs

A survey undertaken to discover unmet needs in the local community may be useful if the range of questions and the geographical area of interest are properly narrowed and focused. There are two general ways to approach this kind of surveying.

1. ***Direct observation*** can be made by taking a walk or drive through the neighborhood. The focus of inquiry may be on its physical problems: eyesores, safety hazards, run-down housing, vacant lots that could be used as gardens, broken equipment in playgrounds, and the like. The focus also may be on people: unsupervised children, a person in a wheelchair trying to enter a library, or people sleeping in the park. Whatever the focus, the tour will be more productive if preceded by a brainstorming session on the kinds of things to watch for and pay attention to.

2. ***Consulting expert informants*** can save a lot of time while acquainting volunteers with some people worth knowing. The focus here is on interviewing people whose job it is to know about local problems (such as a councilman, city manager, settlement house director, county extension agent) and/or people whose jobs expose them to a variety of local problems (such as policeman, social worker, or newspaper reporter).

## Proving a Need Through a Formal Survey

You may decide to undertake a *formal survey* in order to document the existence or demonstrate the seriousness of a suspected need—perhaps one uncovered by one of the previous activities.

The first step is to make sure that others have not already conducted a similar survey or provided a response to the problem. That done, the group should proceed as follows.

- ***Decide exactly what need the survey is aiming to document or reveal.*** It is most vital that the survey should lead to action of some kind in which the group can be involved. Surveys might relate to:
  - —lack of play facilities
  - —lack of a place for latchkey kids to go
  - —need for a youth club for 11–14 year olds
  - —needs of homebound residents
  - —underuse of available services

- ***Design the format of the survey.*** If a questionnaire is used, it should be short, simple to administer, and easy to respond to. Yes/No answers and numerically weighted answers are best and can be augmented by a open-ended question to catch information that might otherwise be missed. Have several trial runs before actually printing the questionnaire.

- ***Decide the size of the survey.*** It is best not to be overambitious here: stick to an area which can be tackled manageably in a short period of time.

- ***Organize the survey itself,*** assigning volunteers to do the footwork and giving them some form of identification, especially if they are going door-to-door.

- ***Tabulate and analyze the information*** gathered and write up the results.

- Most importantly, ***undertake follow-up action*** as a result of what is discovered.

Alternatively, you might try to discover the seriousness of a suspected need through *direct personal experience*. A wheelchair survey is a good example. The group can investigate the availability of facilities for the handicapped by putting themselves into wheelchairs and experiencing the difficulties first-hand.

They not only will document a problem (why not videotape the experience?), but also will come to know what it feels like to be handicapped. The resulting actions could range from writing an article for the local newspaper, to publishing a guide to wheelchair-accessible facilities, to putting pressure on government officials—perhaps by showing the video at a council meeting—to improve handicapped access.

***"Information not made readily available just is not worth gathering."***

## Providing Information

A third purpose of a survey (one that may be the volunteer project itself) is to gather and distribute information of particular value to the local community. Surveys of this type include:

- producing a **handbook of local clubs** and societies for senior citizens (or some other group);

- producing a "**Wheelchair Guide** to . . . ";
- publishing a comprehensive **guide to community services**, perhaps even including information on bus routes and taxi rates; or
- conducting a **historical survey**, researching the early use of Main Street buildings.

The key is that the information is distributed in some way, either through a booklet or pamphlet, a graphic display in city hall or the library, or whatever is appropriate. Information not made readily available just is not worth gathering.

# EXERCISE

## Using the Newspaper to Identify Needs

Newspaper articles can be used to generate project ideas and to help students see themselves as capable of solving community problems. Neighborhood newspapers in urban areas and small-town papers work best because they concentrate on local, rather than national or global, issues. The more focused and concrete the problem, the more likely the students will be to find a strategy for dealing with it.

The basic procedure is as follows: The teacher or coordinator collects several editions of the local newspaper and brings them to a meeting of the students. Working in groups of five to seven people, the students skim the newspapers for articles that illustrate either a community need or a resource for meeting a need.

The members of the group then define the need indicated by the article, brainstorm possible ways of meeting it (someone should keep notes on all suggestions), go back over the suggestions to evaluate them for feasibility, and present specific proposals for action to the entire group.

From this process can come several ideas for projects that the students may initiate in the coming year. Even if few of the proposals come to fruition, the exercise is valuable in helping students become more aware of the needs of the community and of opportunities for service projects.

Below are examples of newspaper articles indicating needs or resources, a few ideas that brainstormers might suggest, and possible actions.

| NEEDS | BRAINSTORMING | ACTION(S) PLANNED |
|---|---|---|
| **Cyclist Hit By Car**<br>**Tim Jones, 10, is in serious condition in County Hospital after being hit by a car driven by J.P. Lorgan, 520 Main Street, Friday at 8:25 a.m. Lorgan reported that the child swerved into the car's path while attempting to avoid a large dog.** | Lower speed limit on school routes.<br>Enforce leash law, impound loose dogs.<br>Give bike safety lessons in elementary schools.<br>Establish bike lanes on frequently traveled bike routes. | Get materials from Consumer Product Safety Commission to run bike safety week study, plan bike paths, campaign to get them instituted. |



30

| NEEDS | BRAINSTORMING | ACTION(S) PLANNED |
|---|---|---|
| **Most Kids Are 'Latchkey' Kids, Study Finds**<br>A recent major study of latchkey children in Hennepin County and conversations with experts and parents explode some prevailing myths about latchkey children, notably that they are a small minority. Researchers and other experts say most children, not just a few, are on their own. Here are other findings:<br>• Children are home alone not just in big cities, but in small towns and on farms.<br>• Youngsters end up on their own because their parents can't find or afford child care — or because children figure they're old enough to take care of themselves.<br>• Latchkey children cooped up in the house are more likely to get bored than they are to get into trouble. Their major preoccupations: watching TV and eating.<br>• Children on their own usually get along fairly well, but they aren't completely comfortable being by themselves. In part, this is because parents tend to place more restrictions on where youngsters can go and what they can do when they are home alone.<br>• There are some ways parents and community organizations can make the latchkey responsibility work better. | Volunteer in after-school program.<br>Teach kids how to take care of themselves when alone.<br>Find out why kids don't want to go to after-school programs.<br>Help parents find someone to take care of child after school. | Start a service to match high school students with elementary children who need care after school, in child's home. |



31

# RECRUITMENT

Recruitment of volunteers is a task faced by the leader of every youth service program—whether it is a club activity or a program in a school where service is required for graduation. While there will be differences in the degree of voluntariness, the level of commitment demanded, and the type of incentives that can be offered, there are certain principles and approaches that are relevant to any effort to recruit young volunteers.

## Designing the Appeal

*"The more informed the volunteer's choice, the less likely it is that there will be complaints, problems and dropouts later."*

1. A good rule of thumb is to ***be as concrete and specific as possible.*** A few people may respond to the invitation to "Be a Volunteer," and a few more may jump at the chance to "Help Make Someone's Day." But many more are likely to respond to a request to do a specific job.

One young man who had shown no interest in joining a volunteer group responded immediately to a request for someone to replace a broken lamp socket for an elderly woman. His only comment on why he never got involved before was: "I didn't know you wanted lamps fixed."

Of course you cannot always be as specific as that, but your recruiting message can at least provide examples of the kinds of things volunteers will do in the program.

Potential volunteers also should be told as soon and as plainly as possible how many hours they will be asked to put in, over what period of time, and what other requirements there may be (such as keeping a journal). The more informed the volunteer's choice, the less likely it is that there will be complaints, problems, and dropouts later.

2. Try to ***convey that community service is enjoyable,*** that helping others needn't be—and most often is not—a dull and dreary affair performed with long faces and heavy hearts. That story needs to be told, and it usually can be told most effectively by previous volunteers or shown through snapshots, slides, or videotapes.

Some activities are fun, and filled with promise of adventure (going horseback riding with retarded children for example). Most often the source of enjoyment is people: meeting new kinds, forming new friendships, being part of a close-knit and spirited group.

*"Few young people will be scared off by a significant challenge."*

3. ***Stress the challenge*** of tackling a tough job ***and the satisfaction*** of completing it creditably. This is not a contradiction of the previous point. An activity can be good fun and hard work, and indeed in many ways the fact that it is hard makes it more rewarding.

Few young people will be scared off by a significant challenge, particularly if it is also made clear that they will have ample help and support in facing it.

A point to keep in mind when forming your own recruitment campaign is that your task is similar to that of a Madison Avenue executive designing an advertising campaign for teenagers. The secret of success is to know the customers' interests and motives, and what it is about a product or organization that will appeal to them.

It is no accident that the recruiting messages of the armed services and fast-food chains both feature young people having a really great time taking on new challenges with the exuberant support of some wonderful new friends.

## Making the Appeal

Successful recruitment is not a one-shot, short-term event in the life of a program. More often it is the product of ongoing efforts to make the program visible to those who ought to know about it. Anything that draws positive attention to the program will help attract new volunteers, and some ways to attain recognition that have special implications for recruiting volunteers are listed below.

1. ***Use the school newspaper or agency newsletter.*** Run a regular column on new volunteer opportunities, and suggest occasional articles about newsworthy projects or profiles of student volunteers.

2. ***Produce a video presentation*** on the program. Students in one program made an MTV-type music video that was very effective in recruiting new volunteers. Others have done documentaries of specific projects. If your school or agency does not have adequate equipment, contact the cable TV company serving your area. Usually it is part of the company's franchise agreement that it make equipment and expertise available to community groups.

3. ***Set up a bulletin board*** in a high traffic area of the school or community with pictures, notices of current needs, and anything else that will draw attention. In some schools the same kind of information is transmitted through a *video monitor.* It also would be possible to put relevant information into an *interactive computer program* that would give passers-by updated information on available placements.

4. ***Keep people who make referrals*** (such as counselors, social workers, administrators, and teachers) ***informed*** and up-to-date on the program so they feel some ownership.

5. Take a hint from other school groups. ***The school P.A. system*** could as easily give periodic information on the volunteer program as it does on the soccer team, and volunteers might wear ***pins and badges*** as appropriately as do members of the school pep club.

6. ***Use previous and current volunteers*** as much as possible in any activities, particularly in making presentations to classes or youth groups. They always will be the most credible witnesses for the program.

7. ***Produce a printed brochure*** or other attractive handout that is easily (and cheaply) distributed to interested people.

8. ***Think about new ways to reach large numbers of people.*** Mass assemblies are seldom effective, but large numbers might be reached by other means. One school with a large volunteer program hosts a *Community Volunteer Fair* each fall at which agencies desiring student help set up booths in the festively decorated library, where they talk to students and make clear by their very presence that young people are needed and wanted in this community.

9. If possible, ***have a conveniently located central office*** where students can find out what volunteer opportunities are currently available and get other information about the program. Staffed by a coordinator and/or students, it will be welcomed by community people as well.

10. In some programs ***parents also must be "recruited,"*** or at least persuaded that their son or daughter should be allowed to participate. Some youth organizations telephone parents to explain what their child will be doing, or even stop in to meet the parents personally.

Some groups encourage teenage volunteers to bring a younger brother or sister and let them get involved in community service too. That approach may persuade a parent that their son or daughter can help with child-care responsibilities while still being involved in community service.

***"Anything that draws positive attention to the program will help attract new volunteers."***

It is a good idea to *require parents to sign a permission form* that includes basic information on the program. Beyond asking for parents' permission, many groups actively solicit the help and involvement of parents, from assisting with transportation of volunteers to joining the students in projects requiring the adults' special expertise. One good way to get parents involved could be to *hold an informational "potluck" dinner* hosted by the young people.

## Directing the Appeal

The aim of any recruitment effort ought to be to attract as varied as possible a group of volunteers: male and female, good students and poor, older and younger, model citizens and renegades. This is a goal not only for the program leader but one which needs to be made clear to counselors, youth workers, teachers, and others who are in a position to channel people into the program.

It can be the death of a program to have it be seen as just for troublemakers, or just for honor students, or just for girls, etc. Part of the power of the experience is in young people working alongside kids they might never associate with otherwise. More importantly still, the community needs the contributions of all kinds of people, and everyone has something they can contribute somewhere. Most importantly, since service is an experience that can benefit all young people, all young people ought to have equal access to it.

***"Part of the power of the experience is in young people working alongside kids they might never associate with otherwise."***

# LIABILITY

The threat of lawsuits is the current Achilles' heel for organizations serving children and youth, and community service programs are no exception. Yet fears about liability do not seem justified in light of the very few cases of injuries or negligence ever reported in these programs. While it is reassuring to know that the chances of legal problems occurring are extremely small, your agency or school does need to understand its legal responsibilities and liability.

*"Since almost every school in the country has addressed liability concerns surrounding work-study programs, you may be able to use the same procedures and policies."*

A good starting place is to **discuss your individualized insurance needs** with your administrator or organization's legal adviser. Some of the key factors to consider in designing the right insurance package are:

- *Transportation arrangements.* Whether students drive their own cars to their volunteer placements or the coordinator drives students in a personal car or agency vehicle will determine what kind of automobile insurance is needed. In some cases, the student's or teacher's personal automobile insurance is deemed sufficient; in some circumstances, schools or agencies should purchase supplemental coverage.
- *School or agency's current insurance coverage.* You may be able to amend your organization's ongoing insurance policy to include coverage for community service activities.

The best way to think about this issue is to identify similar kinds of activities already under way and simply incorporate what you are doing under this coverage. For example, many schools have a work experience or cooperative learning program in which students leave the school building and work for pay a part of the school day. A community service program is not very different in its general approach, in that it involves students leaving the school building, working at a variety of community sites, driving to their work sites, and not being under the direct, personal supervision of the teacher.

Since almost every school in the country already has addressed liability concerns surrounding work-study programs, you may be able to use the same procedures and policies.

- *Volunteer sites' insurance coverage.* Some of the sites to which your students go, such as hospitals, day-care centers, etc., have insurance to cover volunteers.

The second key consideration in the liability issue is to **establish procedures and policies that reduce risks and dangers** to the participants, thereby reducing potential liability for negligence. The section on "Evaluation" outlines some key elements of a record-keeping system, which helps to do just that. For example, parent permission slips are helpful in documenting that parents have consented to have their child in the program.

A master chart showing where volunteers are working indicates that you have taken steps to supervise those students in your charge. These charts, ID cards, parent permission forms, etc., all are indicators that you have established procedures to exercise care and concern for the students' welfare. It is the concept of exercising due care that is at the heart of the negligence issue.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals has outlined a series of principles* pertaining to liability for negligence by school administrators generally, and for cases in which injuries have occurred to students while away from the school building. Many of the

* "Responsibilities for Student Injury Occurring Off School Property, A Legal Memorandum," Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals, March–April 1975, p. 6.



35

*"It is the concept of exercising due care that is at the heart of the negligence issue."*

principles are applicable to youth-serving agencies when they undertake community service. They are useful in developing the appropriate policies and procedures for reducing negligence.

1. The exercise of due care requires an administrator to attempt to foresee dangers to students in his charge and to take whatever precautions seem reasonable to avoid them.
2. Specifically, an administrator is expected to establish rules for the guidance of his or her staff, and to assign adequate supervision for any student activity, but the school and its staff are not expected to be an insurer of the health and safety of students.
3. The greater the possibility of injury, the greater the efforts that should be made to assure student safety.
4. The closer the relationship of a student activity to the purposes and educational program of the school, the more likely a principal or other administrator is to be held accountable to the students for their well-being.
5. In circumstances where supervision and control of student welfare is infeasible, extra care should be taken to assure that the circumstances into which the student is placed are not fraught with inherent dangers. Any necessary risks should be brought to the attention of both students and parents in advance.
6. The degree of care required, and the consequent amount of supervision expected, increase as the age and maturity of students involved decrease.
7. The location in which a student is injured is only one factor in the consideration of whether there was negligence and consequent legal liability on the part of the principal or other educator.

# TRANSPORTATION

Transportation can affect significantly the overall success of a community service program. While it seems like a small issue, it can drain the energy from the most enthusiastic coordinator if it is not successfully resolved. Three factors should be considered in devising a strategy: resources of the sponsoring organization and participants, student safety, and scheduling.

## Resources

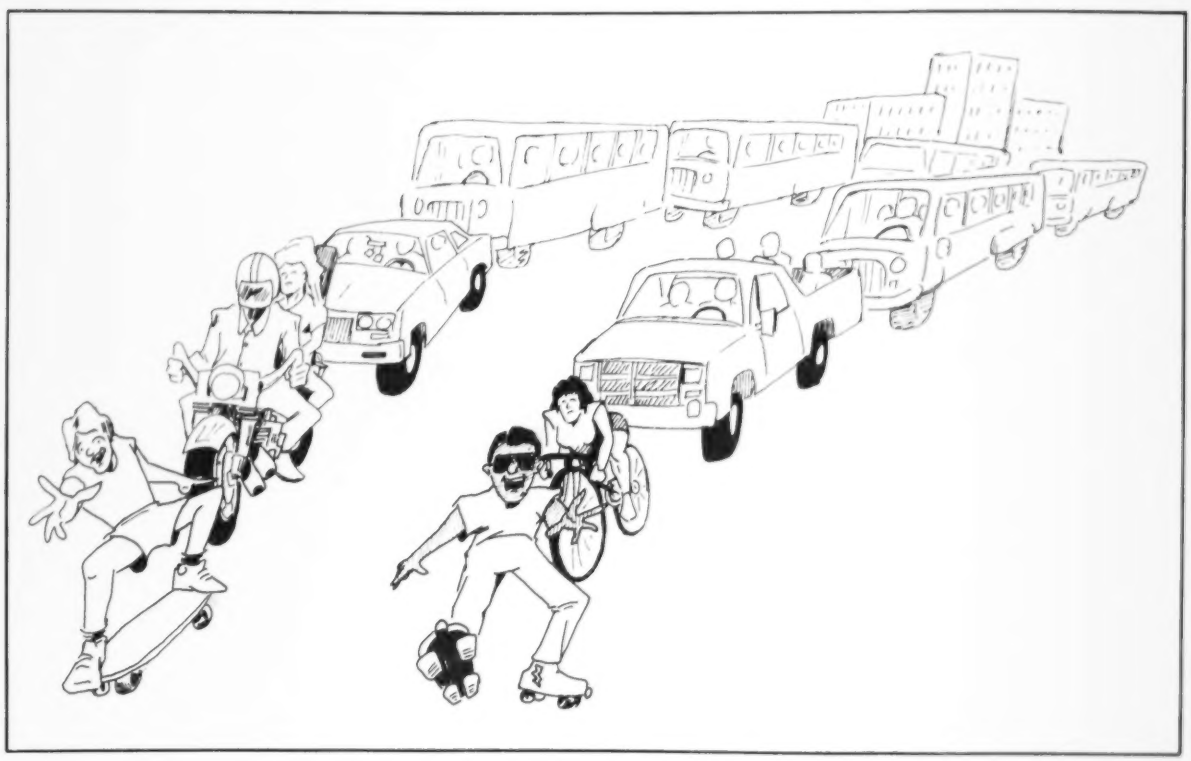
1. ***Student Resources.***

Some programs have relied on the resourcefulness of youth to solve the transportation problem. Some students have cars and can drive other students, as well. Others have the pocket money to travel by public transportation. Try to remain alert, though, to the problems that may be created. For some students, having to be responsible financially for their own transportation may be an obstacle to participation. If this approach denies opportunities to students, then some of the alternatives below ought to be tried.

2. ***School District or Youth Agency Resources.***

Some schools and youth-serving agencies will be able to supply the funds necessary to cover student travel. Some of the ways this can be done include:

- Using a *school district bus with a regular bus driver,* or with a parent or teacher as driver. (The driver must have a chauffeur's license.) Buses often are free during school hours, thus making it possible to obtain their use. However, getting them on a regular basis does require persistence.



- Having the coordinator or teacher *use a personal car.* On the plus side, it's one of the most convenient arrangements, giving the most direct control over moving students around the community. A drawback is that it limits the number of sites to which students can go. Driving students hither and yon also can be tedious. Yet, the opportunity to help students solve a problem or hear about a triumph enroute can break the tedium of any trip!
- *Purchasing mini-buses or vans* specifically for community service programs, sometimes through a grant or gift from a service group (Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.). Since other school or agency programs may find a mini-bus useful, it may be possible to fund its purchase and maintenance through several sources.
- *Supplying bus tokens or fares* to students. Usually, schools and youth agencies can get special rates on public transportation or provide participants with identification cards that enable them to get reduced fares.
- *Having parents or volunteers drive.* Parents sometimes are willing to drive, and it may be possible to organize their time so that different parents drive on alternating days. The PTA may be willing to take on such a project. Such arrangements can be complicated to organize. The more people who are involved, the greater the chance for miscommunication and missed rides.
- *Gathering together a fleet of used bicycles* so that the more energetic students can ride to their community service placements.
- *Borrowing vehicles.* School-owned driver education cars might be available. Some agencies are able to persuade local automobile dealers to contribute vehicles to the programs. Some businesses, particularly large corporations, have vans for transporting their employees to and from work; some schools have arranged to use those vans during the school day when they are not ordinarily in use.

## Safety

It seems obvious that students should not travel in areas or at time that may threaten their physical safety, but the point is so crucial to a program's longevity that it's worth repeating. When students must travel in high-crime areas, it is best to have them travel in groups of two or more.

When students are being driven to a site, the driver (whether an adult or young person) should be reminded of his/her responsibility for the safety of the passengers. Just one accident caused by the careless driving of a program participant could cause great damage to a program's reputation.

## Scheduling

Transportation is a major problem for programs that allow students to volunteer during the regular school day because of the very limited amount of time available for participants to go to and from their placements and back to their next class.

Arranging a two-hour block of time by offering double credit in one subject area or one credit in each of two subjects (English and social studies, for example) is one solution. Another is to schedule the field experience either at the beginning or the end of the school day. This way, students can travel directly from home to the community agency or directly from the site to home.

# LEARNING FROM SERVICE

## Experience Is the Best Teacher—Or Is It?

*Today I got to the nursing home at 2:00. Talked to some ladies. Passed out popcorn at the movie. Went home at 4:00.*
*—From a student's journal*

The student quoted above was surrounded by human drama. On every side were loneliness, love, struggle, joy, death, dignity, injustice, and concern. There were people with wisdom she could draw upon, and with pains she could ease. There were more than a dozen health-related careers to observe. She missed it all.

The same barren sentences were entered in her journal, twice weekly, for six weeks. She was in a youth service program where she had chosen her own assignment. She was needed there. She was engaged in tasks that mattered to others. But she'd seen, felt, and experienced virtually nothing.

It's not supposed to be that way. People are supposed to learn from experience. In fact, a central part of the case for youth service rests on claims for the possibility, even necessity, of learning from experience.

To say that experience is a good teacher, however, does not imply that it's easily or automatically so. If it were, we'd all be a lot wiser than we are. It's true that we can learn from experience. We may also learn nothing. Or we may, like Mark Twain's cat who learned from sitting on a hot stove lid never to sit again, learn the wrong lesson. The key, as Aldous Huxley explained, is that "experience is not what happens to a man; it is what a man does with what happened to him."

## Rewards of Reflection

The purpose of this chapter is to provide practical suggestions for encouraging young people to reflect on their experiences: to think about them, write about them, share them with others, and learn from them.

This is not so easy to accomplish. Serious reflection is seldom the preferred activity of active young people. Its value is not always immediately obvious, and is never guaranteed.

It is important, then, to be able to answer with conviction the question: "Why do it?" Three kinds of benefits are described below: improved academic learning, personal development and program improvement.

### Academic Learning

***Improved basic skills.*** Improving reading, writing, and speaking abilities are a deliberate aim of many youth service programs. Writing about and discussing their experiences and reading about their area of service is an engaging way for students to practice these basic skills.

***Better learning of subject matter.*** A major goal of many school-based programs is to enhance learning by giving students the opportunity to apply knowledge and to practice skills learned in the classroom: helping in a day-care center as part of a child development class or interning at city hall as part of a civics class are two obvious examples.

Since the "real world" is, by nature, *not* organized by academic disciplines, a side benefit is that students learn not only about one particular subject, but also about the interrelationships between that subject and many others.

***"Reflection . . . can allow program experiences to live on in the students' lives in new experiences and new learning."***

***Higher level thinking and problem solving.*** Being able to analyze problems, generate alternatives, and anticipate consequences are critical skills in any area of life. A national study of 30 school-sponsored youth participation programs revealed that the key factor in stimulating complex thinking and improving the problem-solving ability of students was the existence, regularity, and quality of a reflective component (Conrad & Hedin, 1982).

***Learning to learn from experience.*** Reflection is a skill, more accurately a cluster of skills, involving observation, asking questions, and putting facts, ideas, and experiences together to add new meaning to them all. Learning to learn in this way, and instilling the practice as a habit, can allow program experiences to live on in the students' lives in new experiences and new learning.

## Personal Development

***Awareness of changes in oneself.*** Ongoing reflection helps to reveal what personal changes are occurring in self image, skills, ideas about people, and thoughts about a career. Articulating them to others helps make those changes stick.

***A sense of community.*** Meeting with other volunteers provides the opportunity to share successes and failures, to call on the help and advice of others, and to gain support, recognition, and a sense of belonging to some greater effort. It also develops a sense of ownership of the project, and a commitment to its success.

*"Being able to learn from experience . . . increases our capacity to influence subsequent experiences."*

***Taking charge of life.*** Being able to learn from experience gives us the power to influence the meaning and impact of things that we do or that happen to us. It also increases our capacity to influence subsequent experiences. It puts us in charge. It does this by providing a clearer understanding of the world, a heightened sense of who we are and can be, and an increased capacity and inclination to empower others.

## Program Improvement

***Improved service.*** A major reason for including time for reflection is to improve the quality of service. Reflection, considered in this light, includes such things as learning specific skills required by the project, problem solving, brainstorming, devising plans and strategies, and working on communication skills. As a general rule, the more practical the sessions and the more obviously related to the service experience, the more important they will seem and the more energetically the volunteers will participate.

***Improved program.*** For a program director, the ongoing feedback from participants on how things are going and discussion of how to make them go better is invaluable.

# Times of Reflection

In many cases the real question is not whether to encourage reflection, but where and when to do so. The following approaches commonly are used, often in combination.

***Individual conferences.*** In every program, there is some opportunity for individual discussions between participants and their teachers or adult supervisors. As part of the initial placement interview, for example, a student may be guided to set particular goals. These will serve as groundwork for a journal or other self-monitoring method, as well as for periodic follow-up conferences during the course of the program.

***Brief daily meetings.*** Students may meet together briefly either

before or after going to their community placements to get equipment, arrange transportation, file reports, and so forth. These gatherings provide opportunities for exchanging ideas, for reporting on successes or difficulties, or for group problem-solving. On occasion these sessions are extended to allow for more in-depth discussions.

***Weekly group meetings.*** In some cases a group session is built into the program's structure from the beginning. For example, a program involving students in child care might be scheduled for a double period each day, with the students spending three days each week in day-care centers and two days in group meetings. These meetings may be devoted to studying early childhood development or planning activities to be conducted with the children.

***Periodic workshops.*** In some cases, special workshops are scheduled into the overall program. These often are full- or half-day events focusing on such things as the special needs of the people being served and the necessary skills to respond effectively. These sessions may be conducted by the program leader and/or by experts from the community.

## Where and How to Reflect

Designing effective seminars or reflection sessions is difficult, paradoxically, because youth are in new roles of importance and respect: being in charge of things, working alongside adults rather than as underlings. The classroom component may seem too much like business-as-usual. To return to the student role can seem like a letdown, as one 16-year old girl wrote in her journal: " . . . and now it's time to return to school, to change from person back into student."

***Making the sessions as little like school as possible by altering both the setting and the format*** is the key to success. Some leaders have found it possible—and productive—to hold their group meetings in the agencies where the students volunteer, in their own or the students' homes, or even in a conference room at the United Way or Chamber of Commerce. If you must meet within the school, try to find somewhere other than a normal classroom.

Beyond the obvious observation that discussion should be the primary mode of the sessions and that they should include a variety of activities, the format should be that of staff training or staff meetings. This point is not at all trivial, for both setting and format must convey that these sessions are serious, significant, and a continuation of the students' important roles in the community.

*"If you must meet within the school, try to find somewhere other than a normal classroom."*

The ***second key to success is that the sessions be directly related to the work being done in the community.*** This is the most easily accomplished when all the participants are performing similar kinds of service, or are working in the same agency or on one large project. Sometimes the same effect can be achieved by dividing the total volunteer team into two or more subgroups.

When these steps are not possible (and very often they are not), the job of constructing a relevant curriculum is more complicated but not impossible to achieve. The key is to find as many common elements as you can, starting with the unifying factor that all will be providing service to others.

## Organizing the Reflective Component

Learning activities can be organized into the three phases of a program which we refer to as the "three P's":

- *Preparation*—Learning activities conducted prior to a student's volunteer work;
- *Processing*—Assisting students during their service placement to

understand the setting, their feelings, and to solve problems which arise; and

• *Product*—Activities designed to achieve closure and pull together the strands of experience.

## Preparation

There is no formula to determine exactly the right amount of preparation needed prior to the start of volunteer work. A good rule of thumb, however, is that it's usually better to err on the side of too little preparation than too much.

***"It's usually better to err on the side of too little preparation than too much."***

Those who volunteer often do so precisely because they want a new kind of experience. A lengthy orientation period is almost certain to turn them off. In addition, it is nearly impossible to know what actually will be helpful until real issues arise from the work. Even what *we* know is important will not necessarily seem so to young people until they have had a taste of real experience in the field.

A list of topics that could be valuable before the volunteers begin their service experiences follows. We suggest that you choose only some of these and leave the rest until later in the project.

1. ***Build cohesion within the group.*** This is crucial if the group is to function as a source of support and ideas for each volunteer. Members of a cohesive group know and respect each other, and will listen and feel free to talk.
2. ***Clarify responsibilities and expectations.***
3. ***Explore service options*** so each person can make as informed a decision as possible concerning what they will be doing. An exploratory visit that does not imply obligation for either the agency or the potential volunteer should be made whenever possible.
4. ***Arouse interest in and commitment to the program*** and specific service projects. This is as useful and valid for those who participate out of idealism as for those with less lofty motives.
5. ***Assess the values, knowledge, and skills*** each volunteer brings to the project. The benefits of doing this include building the confidence of the volunteer, learning to share sensitive and important things with the group, and providing a portrait of each person as they begin the program which can be contrasted with what/who they are at the end. An exercise for cataloging knowledge and skills can be found on page 24.
6. ***Develop background information*** about the people and problems the volunteers will encounter. The goal is more to sensitize and revise preconceptions than to provide detailed information.
7. ***Develop and practice skills*** that will be used (from using a crosscut saw to listening to a child). This should include practice in the skills needed to learn from service, namely, to be vigilant observers and persistent questioners of experience.

## Processing

It is in the day-to-day processing of experience that we realize, or miss, the limitless potential for learning from service. Processing experience always means thinking about it, being *consciously engaged* in it. This conscious engagement will take many forms: observing, thinking, talking, listening, asking questions, writing, reading, creating, and more. The unique value of the result lies in its personal nature: personally discovered knowledge, personally formed ideas, and personally acquired values and beliefs.

**"It is in the day-to-day processing of experience that we realize, or miss, the limitless potential of learning from service."**

A list of topics and techniques to help bring substance and form to this task follows. Some are individual activities; most involve a group.

1. ***Writing, especially keeping a journal*** may be the most

common requirement in youth service programs. This is a mystifying new experience for many young people, and suggestions for what to include in a journal are included on page 45.

2. ***Analyzing and solving problems*** is a useful way to think about experience and is necessary for effective action. A most useful approach for identifying and analyzing problems is that of the "Critical Incident." An exercise is found on page 44.

Its special strength, and that of problem-solving generally, is that it gives meaningful focus to group discussions. Rather than the often awkward "show and tell," it treats the volunteer group as a problem-solving team, a source of ideas on how to deal with one another's real dilemmas.

3. ***Learning and practicing skills*** probably will be a feature of the everyday service experience, but it also can be given concentrated emphasis through special workshops held during the course of the program.

The skills to emphasize will be dictated by the nature of each program, and may be as specific as how to glaze a window or as general as learning to be assertive.

Some skills, such as assertiveness, could be useful in almost any kind of service experience. The same is true of interpersonal skills such as active listening and effective communication.

Some program leaders have found it useful to focus their seminar sessions or workshops around a cluster of skills that relate to some central theme (such as leadership) or occupation (such as human service professional).

*"Some program leaders have found it useful to focus their seminar sessions around a cluster of skills that relate to some central theme or occupation."*

4. ***Giving observation exercises and assignments*** may help give participants an idea of where to look to find learning opportunities in service. A day-care center can present a scene of mass confusion, or be "just a bunch of little kids playing around" to a person who has no questions, no idea of (or interest in) the wonders that may be discovered by watching the scene more closely. The same scene can be a valuable laboratory to the person looking for answers to specific questions on child development.

5. ***Providing background sessions*** (such as lectures or films) can be highly useful when sharply focused on the work the students are doing. For example, a description of the operation of small claims court would be extremely helpful to students in a consumer advocacy group who are about to present a claim.

Problems can arise when group members are in a wide variety of placements, however. One solution is to ask the agencies to conduct such sessions for student volunteers and/or to include them in their own staff training or briefing sessions.

6. ***Teaching academic subject matter*** is the chief focus of reflection in some school-based programs, and can be useful in any program when the application to real experience can be directly shown.

## Product

Service programs almost always will be strengthened if participants work toward some product that summarizes and integrates their previous work. The product may center on the achievements of individuals and/or what was gained by the group.

There should be the opportunity, even the requirement, for individuals to articulate what has been gained. It is in giving expression to what we have learned that learning is solidified, clarified, and incorporated into our being. Some ways to encourage this are listed below.

1. ***Have each participant prepare a "tip sheet"*** of things he or

she has learned to pass on to later volunteers. For example, youths working in nursing homes have prepared sheets outlining "Ten Rules for Working with the Elderly." Young volunteers may even agree to return to "break in" their successors.

2. ***Have each participant write an informal essay or structured research paper*** to demonstrate the expertise they have gained. One approach is to have each participant, at about the midpoint of the program, formulate a list of questions about their volunteer work. The final paper is *their* answer to one or more of their own questions, with the information drawn from their own experiences and reflections on those experiences.

3. People often need ***help in finding language to express what they have learned*** or how they have changed. Sometimes it is helpful to have a list of possibilities to respond to. This guidebook contains several lists from which one could construct a master list of the "things one might have gained this year." [See Needs and Tasks of Adolescence (p. 60), Aims and Outcomes of Service Programs (p. 61), and the Volunteer Evaluation (p. 66).]

*"For the group as a whole, there should be the opportunity to present, proclaim, and preserve what they have accomplished."*

For the group as a whole, there should be the opportunity to present, proclaim, and preserve what they have accomplished. Some suggestions follow.

The ***project itself may culminate in an event*** or a product such as a freshly painted house, a newly built playground, or a published booklet on facilities accessible to handicapped persons. Even then, perhaps especially then, there is additional value in documenting the accomplishment.

One way to do this is to produce a lasting document on the project: a photo essay, videotape, booklet, or slide presentation. This should show both the achievements and the process in order to help interested persons attempt a similar project.

***Student groups also might make a formal presentation*** on the project to a school principal or board member, or to an appropriate audience like the city council, school board, cooperative extension agents, service club, or other students. The point is to have the chance to tell *some* outside audience what you have achieved.

Finally, ***there ought to be a formal closing to the project*** that affirms and celebrates what has been accomplished. This can range from a simple sharing of personal highlights to a full-scale party involving volunteers, agency personnel, funders, and people served.

# EXERCISE
## Critical Incident

1. **Describe an incident or situation that was a critical problem in at least the sense that it was not immediately obvious to you what to do or say.**
2. **What's the first thing you thought of to do (or say)?**
3. **List three (3) other actions you might have taken (or things you might have said).**
4. **Which of the above seems best to you now? Why is it best?**
5. **What do you think is the real problem in the situation; why do you think it came up at all?**


44

# ACTIVITY
## Writing a Daily Journal

Asking each volunteer to keep a regular journal is one of the most valuable and commonly used reflective activities. In some cases the journals remain the confidential property of their writers; in others, they are shared regularly with an adult leader or peer; sometimes they are discussed by a group.

The point of keeping a journal is to prompt people to notice what is happening, think about experiences and reflect on their meaning and, from that, to grow. At the very least, keeping a journal gives volunteers a record of what they have done and some ideas to share in group discussions and individual conferences.

The following suggestions will help young people who say: "I don't know what to write!" The whole list could be given out at once with the suggestion of writing on one or two items a day. Alternatively, a smaller number could be selected and given as a guide for a weekly or monthly report.

### Suggestions for a Daily Journal

***About your work***

- What do you do on a typical day at your placement?
- How has this changed since you first began there (different activities, more or less responsibility, etc.)?
- Tell about the best thing that happened this week; something someone said or did, something you said or did, a feeling, an insight, a goal accomplished.
- What's the most difficult part of your work?
- What thing (or things) did you dislike most this week? Why?
- If you were in charge of the place where you volunteer, what would you do to improve it?
- If you were the supervisor, would you have the volunteers do anything different from what you are doing? Would you treat them differently?
- Tell about a person there who you find interesting or challenging to be with. Explain why.
- What do you feel is your main contribution?
- If a time warp placed you back at the first day of this program, what would you do differently the second time around?

***About you***

- How do people see you there? As a staff member? a friend? a student—or what? What do you *feel* like when you're there?
- What did someone say to you that surprised you? Why?
- What compliments have been given and what did they mean to you? How did you react? What about criticisms and your reaction to them?
- Did you take (or avoid taking) some risk this week? Were there things you wanted to say or do that you didn't say or do?
- What happened that made you feel you would (or would not) like to do this as a career?
- What kind of person does it take to be successful at the kind of work you do (as volunteer, as a career)?
- What did you do this week that made you proud? Why?
- What feeling or idea about yourself seemed especially strong today?
- What insights have you gained into people (what makes them happy or sad, successful or failures, pleasant or unpleasant, healthy or sick, etc.)?
- How similar is your impression of yourself to the impression others seem to have of you?
- Tell about something you learned as a result of a disappointment or even a failure.
- Think back on a moment when you felt especially happy or satisfied. What does that tell you about yourself?

# EVALUATION

Administrators of community service programs often are required to evaluate some aspect of their program. First, school coordinators usually need to assess individual student performance in order to assign a grade or determine how much credit to give a student for volunteer work.

Second, all programs need to monitor such things as where students volunteer, how often they attend, the quality of their work, the kind of supervision the site provides, and whether the student volunteers are being given enough or too much responsibility. Having basic information about how your program is functioning is critical for its long-term health and success.

Finally, you may find yourself in a position where you must convince funders that their money is being spent wisely or convince a school board that the program is educationally sound and intellectually credible. In such cases, a different type of information is needed and you may need to conduct a formal program evaluation.

*"Having basic information about how your program is functioning is critical for its long-term health and success."*

This section offers suggestions and tools for conducting all three types of evaluation. None will be treated in great depth in this guidebook; rather, we offer a conceptual framework for thinking about evaluation, suggest alternative approaches to evaluating participants and programs, and share some specific evaluation tools.

## Assessing Individual Student Performance

Assessing a student's accomplishments in any setting is a complex and chancy business that is more art than science. A volunteer service experience presents at least as great—and sometimes a greater—challenge to the evaluator as does traditional academic work in the classroom.

Among the complicating factors are the nature of the experience, the fact that it is not always performed under the watchful eye of a supervisor, the paradox that the greatest benefits of service often are the least tangible, and the fact that there is no pool of ready-made and valid test items to administer.

Some school programs assume that the relevant factors are so ambiguous and difficult to measure that they do not give letter grades at all, instead awarding credit for hours completed. (For example, a student completing 100 hours receives a credit regardless of the exact nature and quality of his or her performance.)

Some schools avoid grading service experiences out of principle, feeling that doing so may rob the participants of some important value of the experience.

Others, either by choice or necessity, do assign grades, assessing the quality of the student's performance on a variety of cognitive, social, and personal criteria. As in the assessment of any learning experience, the teacher must first specify what the student is expected to accomplish through volunteer work and at what level of achievement. The list of outcomes under "Aims and Outcomes of Youth Service Programs" (p. 61), is a good starting place.

Next, goals and expectations need to be communicated to the student (and possibly to the field supervisor, as well). A variety of assessment tools, based on the program goals, should be used to gain as complete a picture as possible of the student's performance. The teacher may use any combination of the following to arrive at a final assessment.

- ***Written work by the student.*** Under the section on "Learning from Service," techniques were suggested for helping students integrate their volunteer experiences with their academic studies. They include keeping a journal or diary; completing observation reports and critical incident reports; preparing a research project chosen and developed by the student to reflect his expertise in his sphere of activity; writing an essay



46

describing what the student gained personally and academically from the experience, and so forth. Any or all of these activities can be used in the evaluation process since judgements could be made about the quality, depth, and understanding conveyed by these written assignments.

• ***Group discussions.*** For some students, sharing experiences in a group discussion is easier and more natural than writing about them and they may tend to have deeper insights in such a forum. The student's level of participation could be part of the final assessment.

*"For some students, sharing experiences in a group discussion is easier and more natural than writing about them."*

• ***Individual conferences with students.*** A private interview with a student may reveal knowledge, insights and skills that might not otherwise be forthcoming.

• ***Evaluation by supervisor.*** Rely on supervisors for information that only they can give you. Whenever possible, make their evaluation forms brief and easy to complete. Open-ended questions, though more time-consuming to complete than checklists, provide a more in-depth and complex understanding of the student's achievement. An example of a supervisor's form is included on page 66.

• ***Self assessment.*** Students may be given a role in their own evaluation including suggesting the grade to be received, or evaluating the quality of the field placement and the supervision. Examples of such forms are included on page 69.

## Monitoring the Program

Monitoring the community service program involves keeping track of what individual volunteers do. It includes gathering other information, as well, such as how effective the coordinator is in organizing, running, and publicizing the program; how successful the host agencies are in developing appropriate volunteer jobs for the students; how receptive the community is to youth volunteers, etc.

The primary purpose of monitoring is to give the program administrator some idea of how the total program and its sub-parts are functioning so that problems can be identified and corrected, and effective elements reinforced.

Another purpose simply is to document what is happening so information is available to parents, funders, boards of directors, principals, or whoever asks about the program.

A good monitoring plan should include a record-keeping system, visits to the project sites, regular telephone contacts, and written evaluation by volunteers, supervisors, parents, clients, etc.

***A Record-Keeping System.*** The basic criterion in setting up such a system is that it not be too complicated to keep up to date. Records that are outdated or incomplete can be dangerous to the very existence of your program (for example, if a parent needs to get in touch with their child in an emergency and you can't locate him because you haven't updated your list of field sites). At best, incomplete or out-of-date records can be inconvenient (for example, to a substitute trying to oversee the program in the director's absence).

*"A good monitoring plan should include a record-keeping system, visits to the project sites, regular telephone contacts, and written evaluation."*

Some forms you may find it worthwhile to keep include:

• ***Sign-in sheets*** at the field sites or attendance cards for each participant to document hours of service. (These may be as informal as a blank sheet of paper or as formal as a time card to be punched when a volunteer checks in and out.)

Some programs are reluctant to impose a tight system of supervision on students because it seems to contradict the independence and autonomy encouraged though the program. Others think it essential to have an almost foolproof system of checking in and checking up on students.

• ***Parent permission forms*** on file indicating that parents are aware of and approve of their child's involvement. Note, however, that in

terms of liability, these forms are not considered to be binding by the courts. Nevertheless they do help document an overall concern for the health and safety of the participants.

• ***Student ID cards.*** These can save confusion and embarrassment about the reason the students are out in the community. Student volunteers can show the cards to clients or anyone asking what they are doing. The card might read:

> ***Mary Jones*** **is a member of the community service class at Western High School from January to June 1988. Class members serve as volunteers in agencies across our community. If you wish further information, contact Mr. Goodturns, Western High School, Telephone 123-4567.**

• ***A master chart*** showing where volunteers are at any given moment. A wall map with colored dots showing your students all around the community is a good way to illustrate the scope of your program and impress visitors.

• ***A record of each volunteer,*** showing when and where he or she has worked, and the tasks performed. You may wish to keep a folder for each volunteer that includes written work and associated materials such as supervisor reports. A school's official transcript should include information on service work performed by the student.

*"A school's official transcript should include information on service work performed by the student."*

• ***A record of each agency*** with which you are involved, giving brief details of current volunteer jobs, contact people's names and phone numbers, and, if desired, assessments of past involvement and suggestions for future activities. This might also include a volunteer job description, so that agencies can register their need for student volunteers and spell out exactly what they want volunteers to do.

• ***A record of total hours of service provided*** by the volunteer group, multiplied by some appropriate dollar amount (at *least* minimum wage). This yields an impressive and readily understood summary of how much the community has benefited from the program.

Similarly, a record of hours contributed by the site supervisors, trainers, etc., multiplied by a different dollar figure, yields useful information on the benefits (i.e., donated expertise) of the program to the sponsoring agency or school. Some programs print a list of these people and title them "adjunct faculty" to further emphasize the point.

***Visits to Project Sites.*** There is no better way of getting a sense of the site—and of demonstrating to both supervisor and students that you think what they are doing is important—than to visit the placement. It usually is beneficial to get in touch with the supervisor beforehand and arrange a convenient time. However, unannounced informal visiting also can be very useful to give a truer idea of how effective the placement is for all concerned.

***Telephone Monitoring.*** Regular site visits often are prohibitively time-consuming and telephone calls can supplement face-to-face contacts. It usually is difficult to develop a relationship by telephone alone, so try to visit the field site early in the program to establish rapport. Then use the telephone as a supplement.

***Written Evaluations.*** Forms for supervisor assessment of student performance and student evaluation of the field site already have been described. In addition, asking parents to evaluate what their son or daughter has gained from the program can yield valuable information for measuring the program's performance, and also serves a public relations function.

Also, don't neglect the recipients of service themselves, who probably have the most detailed knowledge about the program's impact. Their evaluations sometimes can be gathered on a formal or informal basis.

## Formal Program Evaluation

*"A proposal that includes a reasonable evaluation plan may help convince funders that you are a good risk."*

The need for a formal, written evaluation of a community service program is relatively rare, most often occurring when a program has received funding from a foundation or government agency.

Sometimes, offering to do a formal evaluation can help secure funding for a new program. A proposal that includes a reasonable evaluation plan may help convince funders that you are good risk—a serious and thoughtful contender.

Moreover, an evaluation that shows positive results can be very helpful to friendly decision-makers (school board members, United Way allocation panels, legislators, city councils) to convince their critics to continue to support volunteer programs for youth.

Formal program evaluation is a process of systematically identifying, collecting, analyzing, and reporting information about an educational program or activity for the purpose of better understanding a program or making decisions about its future.

Since program evaluation is complex, technical, and not very enjoyable work, it's probably best to consult with or turn the task over to someone who has experience in the field. The disadvantages of using professional evaluators include expense and the difficulty of finding someone competent to evaluate a community service program. The advantages are that a good evaluator will bring a more objective view to the task than would the program's staff, and will be aware of a variety of evaluation techniques not readily available to most people.

If you can't afford a professional evaluator or can't find a competent one, you or someone in the program may be able to do the evaluation yourself. A manual, entitled "Instruments and Scoring Guides: Experiential Education Evaluation Project," contains instruments designed especially for evaluating community service programs. It is available from the Center for Youth Development and Research, University of Minnesota. (See "Resources," p. 62.)

# RATIONALE: SELLING THE YOUTH SERVICE PROGRAM

Knowing that you want to organize a youth service program, having projects for young people to do, and developing a plan for incorporating service into your overall program are necessary but not sufficient conditions for actually implementing the plan. Usually someone else must be convinced—either to allow it to be tried or continued, to provide resources for it, or to become a part of it. Overcoming this hurdle is the focus of this section.

Most readers of this guidebook already will be believers in youth service, so the arguments presented here are offered primarily as a guide for convincing others. They also may serve as a reminder to practitioners of why they do what they do and as reinforcement for the efforts they are putting forth.

The arguments are presented in terms of anticipated benefits to youth, to the community, and to the school or agency. For consistency—and because decision-makers in this realm may be the hardest to convince—the arguments are stated in reference to schools, with the understanding that all of them could be adapted to other settings as well.

## Setting the Scene

It's 8:00 a.m. on a drizzly spring morning. As you stand outside the door of the program committee of . . . (you pick it: school, youth agency, church, foundation, etc.) you are reviewing the arguments you have planned to give them.

It was only yesterday the chairperson notified you that some of the committee members had doubts about your proposal and wished to ask some questions. Last night you tried to anticipate their possible concerns and to formulate several concise statements that you could use as various issues arose in the conversation.

To help keep your case focused on the right issues you have sorted them out in your mind as benefits of the program to the community, to your own organization, and to youth themselves.

## Benefits to the Community

*"That the young volunteers will be providing important services is what makes the program vital and real and what raises it above the level of just another activity or lesson."*

It's entirely possible that this issue will not even be raised, but it is one you want to be ready for and even raise yourself if the group does not. It is of fundamental importance because the very bedrock of the program is that it is geared to meeting real needs in the community. That the young volunteers will be providing important services is what makes the program vital and real and what raises it above the level of just another activity or lesson.

Imagine, then, that a committee member opens with such a statement as: "It's hard for me to imagine exactly what they're going to do out there. Is there really enough for them to do?" Another comments: "We have enough trouble controlling these kids in our regular program. It's hard for me to see what good they're going to do running around the community like maniacs." A third adds: "We already have high unemployment here and won't this just exploit kids while taking away jobs from people who need them?"

Those questions are just what you were hoping someone would ask, and you are ready.

1. ***Cite an obligation to the community.*** "Our young people receive a great deal from this community—free education being only one of those benefits. I feel they have a responsibility to acknowledge this debt by returning to it some service of value—even while they are young."



50

That said, you might need to raise their consciousness regarding the potential contributions that young volunteers can make. The best way to do that is to tell what youth in other areas already are doing.

2. ***Note that young people in other communities are making a great contribution.*** "There are thousands of examples from all over the country of young people making important contributions to their communities:

- providing services to elderly people in their homes and companionship for those in nursing homes;
- collecting food for the hungry;
- teaching swimming, canoeing, and other recreational skills to handicapped children;
- running recycling centers;
- cleaning rivers and streams;
- turning vacant lots into playgrounds;
- putting out community newspapers;
- using cable TV public access channels to document and dramatize local health and safety issues;
- petitioning city hall;
- serving on civic administrative boards; and
- tutoring their peers and younger children.

"The examples are endless. Our kids are as capable as kids anywhere, and our community's needs as great as those of any other. I think we should be part of this great effort to bring together the energies of kids and the needs of society."

***"We should be part of this great effort to bring together the energies of kids and the needs of society."***

3. ***Cite a particular local need.*** "We have the highest percentage of people over 70 of any community in the state and they sit there locked up in their homes and apartments afraid that if they come out someone will mug them. We can help change that."

Or you could say: "Nobody else is going to remove that huge pile of debris from behind the playing field, though everyone knows it's a public nuisance. If we mobilize the kids we could do it ourselves in an afternoon. The place would be safer and we would show the neighborhood that we practice what we preach about the environment."

51

4. ***Tabulate how much person-power you have.*** "We have 1500 students in our high school. If we averaged one hour of service by each student each week that would add up to more than 50,000 hours of service to the community in one school year (and, figured at the minimum wage, over $200,000 worth of time contributed)."

5. ***Promote the school as a center of expertise.*** "One of the greatest concentrations of technical know-how and potentially available human energy in this community is right here in this school. Wouldn't it be great if our students and their teachers could go out to apply their knowledge to help their community? We could take the lead in promoting unified efforts to attack some of our most difficult community problems."

6. ***Note that a volunteer program can help bring the community together.*** "A meeting I propose calling early in the year will involve kids, school administrators and department heads, and representatives of youth agencies, social service agencies, service clubs, the chamber of commerce, the mayor, and a couple of other groups. We will discuss ways we can work together to improve our community. We all face the same problems and share a stake in solving them. It's time we got together."

7. ***Emphasize that volunteers do not replace paid workers.*** "I'm sensitive to your concerns about jobs, but the major contribution of young volunteers is usually to perform tasks that, no matter how needed and how much desired, are not very high on the list of things society is willing to pay for.

"A lonely old woman without family or friends deserves to look forward to a visit from someone. It's important that she does. But we're not likely to pay someone to do it—and I'm not sure it would be the same if we did. Because they are young, and precisely because their commitment is voluntary and short-term, young people are able to bring a fresh energy and commitment to tasks that for others would be tedious and burdensome—and not very attractive as careers."

8. ***Don't oversell the case.*** "I don't mean to endorse the romantic notion that every sixteen-year-old is a candidate for sainthood. Kids also are capable of being selfish, tactless, bull-headed, and undependable. They often lack the skills, knowledge, patience, or sense of perspective a situation demands. This only reinforces the case that they need these kinds of experiences and that we, as adults, have an important role in working along with them and guiding them."

Should you manage to convince—or at least silence—your critics on those issues, you can expect someone to raise another by saying something like: "Don't get me wrong. No one is more in favor of youth doing things for others than I am. It's just that *we* are in the business of . . . (whatever) . . . not social service."

It's time, then, for you to outline the organizational benefits of a volunteer program.

## Benefits to School or Agency

1. ***Emphasize the public relations value of volunteer programs.*** "Let's face it, we're in trouble on the new bond issue, particularly with that block of voters who don't have any kids in school. If we could demonstrate that our school is doing things for many segments of our community, and that it is a valuable resource for everyone, that would be just the kind of publicity we could use most right now."

2. ***Stress the immediate and practical benefits to the organization.*** "One aspect of the program will be to provide service to the school itself. Tutoring is one obvious example, and I'm sure we can think of many others. What a difference it could make to our whole organization if the kids shared responsibility for making it work better."

***"Community service . . . helps the school meet its goal of providing a wide range of options for all students."***

3. ***Note the wide range of meaningful options offered.*** "Community service is one of those rare things that really do offer something for everyone. For kids who are used to a steady diet of failure in school it provides the opportunity for success and achievement and recognition. For those who find academic work a breeze it offers a significant new challenge, demanding a new set of skills. It gives everyone an insight into social issues that they are unlikely to get from textbooks and lectures. It helps the school meet its goal of providing a wide range of options for all students."

4. ***Describe the program as a source of school pride and spirit.*** "Last year, when we had that food drive, it was inspiring to see how the kids responded, how the whole school got behind it with such spirit and seriousness. A community service program could make that kind of experience an integral part of our school's life. It would provide a new source of school pride and spirit."

5. ***Note that community service helps fulfill a stated mission.*** "We all care about building character: developing attributes such as honesty, responsibility, concern for others, and selflessness.

"But those traits, like being a good citizen, are not things to know or believe in, or even things to possess, so much as what you *do* and what you *are*. They do not become part of a student through reading or discussion, but they can through action. We've known that since Aristotle pointed out that you become just by doing just acts, brave by doing brave acts, temperate by acting with temperance, and so forth."

6. ***Stress that service nurtures idealism.*** "Sure there's plenty of cynicism, apathy, selfishness, prejudice, and foolishness among kids, but there's also idealism, love, and concern for justice. It ought to be an important part of our program to nurture that idealism and create ways for people to act on the very best that is in them. The point is we don't have to create good character, only allow its expression and development."

That's two arguments down. You are making progress. The committee members are more interested, less hostile. There's a moment's silence, broken finally by one person who says: "The job of the school is to impart academic knowledge and basic intellectual skills—period! We're already being asked to do too much and now you want us to become a volunteer agency for the community besides."

You're now ready to defend the program's benefits to young volunteers.

***"Young people have become too insulated and isolated from adults and from the productive tasks of society."***

## Benefits to Youth

This is exactly the issue you've been waiting for and you pause a moment before answering. In that moment, you reflect on the limited social role occupied by adolescents and the way their lives have been compartmentalized. This has long been acknowledged as a serious hindrance to the healthy development of youth, and the arguments that you'll raise all trace themselves in some way to this general problem. You may not have an opportunity to spell out the whole argument, but it will be helpful for you to have in mind the general context out of which arise the particular points you present.

A number of recent reports on the status of youth have concluded that the dominant institutions that socialize young people are not preparing them adequately for adulthood.

School occupies an increasingly large portion of a young person's life, and with that has come an overemphasis on cognitive skills and book-knowledge and restricted opportunities for developing independence and responsibility. Schools provide few opportunities for students to

learn to manage their own affairs or acquire the ability to take decisive action.

Young people have become too insulated and isolated from adults and from the productive tasks of society. Schools provide few opportunities for participating with other age groups; for exploring larger sections of economic, political, and social life; or for learning to care about and for others.

There is little opportunity, either in school or elsewhere, for a young person to be a contributor or to be recognized as one. Too little opportunity is afforded young people to experience the satisfaction of undertaking and completing a needed task, to feel the joy and endure the pain of significant participation in the world—of *acting* and not always just *preparing* for action.

***"If this society is to produce adults who can function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens, then new structures and processes for socializing youth must be created within the framework of the school itself and in cooperation with other institutions serving young people."***

If this society is to produce adults who can function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens, then new structures and processes for socializing youth must be created within the framework of the school itself and in cooperation with other institutions serving young people.

More specific arguments arising from this general issue are listed below starting with those most directly and later moving to those more indirectly related.

1. ***Responsible contributors.*** "Society needs what youth can contribute. Young people need the opportunity to made a contribution, to take on real responsibility, to make a difference to others, and to experience being needed. Self-centeredness, apathy, cynicism, hostility, and immature behavior are partly consequences of treating youth as incompetent, irresponsible and superfluous beings unable to decide things for themselves."

2. ***Citizenship.*** "In most schools, ours among them, the concept of 'good citizenship' has been trivailized to mean coming to class on time and not fooling around too much.

"Training for *real* citizenship requires a great deal more and ought to involve participating in the community now—knowing what's going on, caring about it, and doing something about it. If our kids could experience that now, and see that their participation *can* make a difference, that civic involvement is rewarding and even enjoyable, they're much more likely to continue being involved as adults.

3. ***Social isolation.*** "We live so much of our lives in little boxes: old people here, young people there, handicapped people someplace out of sight, blacks in one part of town, whites in another, rich communities, poor neighborhoods, and on and on.

"To understand people you have to interact with many different kinds: rich, poor, old, young, sick, healthy. To understand institutions you have to get behind their walls, hear the sobs in a shelter for runaways, feel the emptiness of living years without visitors in a drab nursing-home room, see how frustrating it is to have one's painstakingly prepared plan rejected by an administrative board whose members hardly glanced at the proposal.

"What honestly do we do that reveals such truths about life? What else do we do that makes us confront what needs to be done, that shows how difficult it is, how much more we need to know and be able to do?"

4. ***Requisites of adult success.*** "Numerous studies reinforce what we already sense from our own experience: that academic achievement in high school is not always a good predictor of success in adult life.

"Things that *do* predict adult success are personal and interpersonal characteristics such as self esteem and autonomy, independent thinking, skill in problem solving, ability to get along and to work with others, and the like. These are precisely the kinds of attributes that are called upon and developed in service experiences."

Young people's diminished social role and impoverished experience base also affect their personal and psychological development in ways that include the following:

5. ***Self esteem.*** "One of the most valuable assets a person can possess is a healthy self regard. Too many kids come to school with a damaged self image only to have it knocked down even further. Even warm and caring teachers bursting with praise are not enough to reverse the slide.

"Strong self concepts are the result of actual positive accomplishments in social interaction with a variety of people. Community service offers young people the chance to discover, develop, and display talents and skills that are seldom called on in a school and to receive recognition that might never otherwise come to them.

"This is true for all students, the most academically able as well as the least. It's also an opportunity to discover one's limits and recognize abilities that need to be strengthened."

6. ***Identity formation.*** "There's not much that any young person is doing that is more important than asking 'who am I?,' and then forging an identity out of his or her experiences.

"Service broadens the range of those experiences, gives opportunities to try on new roles, and offers new levels of responsibility, and a chance to develop dormant parts of themselves.

"Young men in a day-care center can develop their caring and nurturing selves; young women in a recreation center or mayor's office can discover the assertive leader and decision-maker that is in them."

7. ***Explore careers.*** "We have become a heavily service-centered society, and the need to attract highly talented people into service occupations such as teaching is widely acknowledged.

"A community service program will allow young people to explore careers in these areas and to make a more informed decision about whether such a profession is for them. Some will decide it is not. Others will discover, as one gifted young woman wrote in her successful application as one of the country's 100 Presidential Scholars: ' . . . after having the chance to teach kindergarten I may choose to teach at the elementary level. (But) wherever I am 10 years from now, I . . . will continue to use my gifts in the service of others.'"

*"Community service offers young people the chance to discover, develop, and display talents and skills that are seldom called on in a school."*

In addition to the personal benefits outlined above, community service offers benefits related to intellectual development and academic learning.

8. ***Law of diminishing returns.*** "The average student completing 12th grade has spent nearly 15,000 hours sitting in classrooms. Somewhere in there the law of diminishing returns comes into play. For instruction to remain vital, effective, and relevant, we need to vary the settings and styles in which it is delivered. What is learned needs to be applied and tested in a more demanding and realistic fashion than by words in a test booklet or marks on an electronic score sheet."

9. ***Remoteness.*** "Much of what we teach is so abstract, so remote. A powerful function of service experiences can be to show that academic knowledge actually is useful, and really can be applied to help a person better understand and more effectively carry out a task that matters to someone in the real world.

"A student in an English class who helps publish a youth newspaper or a math student calculating the angle for a wheelchair ramp not only will find academic skills useful, but will be faced with a stiffer test of excellence than any paper-and-pencil test can offer. They also will lay themselves open to both harsher criticism and more satisfying reinforcement than can be conveyed by any letter grade on a test booklet."

**"A powerful function of service experiences can be to show that academic knowledge actually is useful."**



55

10. ***Complex thinking skills.*** "Data drawn from SAT tests and from studies of the National Assessment of Educational Progress demonstrate that the much-publicized drop in student achievement is not so much in basic skills as in complex thinking, problem solving, and the application of knowledge.

"A well-run service program that combines significant experience with serious reflection demands higher level thinking and learning by engaging youth in solving problems where all the data is not given, the questions not delineated, the chapters not summarized, and the answers not printed in the back of a book."

11. ***Learning style.*** "The workshop on learning styles we had last spring convinced many of us that we have to provide more varied instructional styles within our program. When classroom instruction is combined with real service experience we draw on the strength of those kids who learn best through active experimentation and we help develop that capacity in others."

12. ***Application of knowledge.*** "We try very hard in this school to make people aware of social problems and of real human needs. If we only inform and arouse concern, we may leave kids with a feeling of helplessness. Community service not only exposes students to the effects of social problems on real human beings, but also offers them a chance to be a part of the solution to those problems."

13. ***My own wish to matter.*** "I want to engage the kids I work with in learning experiences that matter, where they can see the consequences of learning, even *feel* them, where there is some intensity and sense of purpose, and where they engage in things that affect not only what they know but who they are and wish to be."

You might want to add a final note of caution:

"Enthusiasm for community service should not lead us to overstate this case either. While some things are best learned through community participation, others are most effectively learned through books, lectures, essays, discussions, and the like. It is through the intelligent mixture of all these forms that we can expect the most meaningful learning and development to take place."

You rest your case.

# EXERCISE

## Community Service and Youth Development: An Exercise for School and Youth Agency Staff

More often than not the best way to develop a rationale for community service is not to write a position paper or present a persuasive speech, but instead to help members of an organization discover for themselves how service experiences contribute to the goals they are trying to achieve. One way to do this is presented in this exercise, which involves the following steps.

I. Read through the list of "Needs and Tasks of Adolescence" (page 60), and:
   A. Check off those that are—or should be—important goals of your agency (school) or your own work with youth.
   B. (Optionally,) put a star by goals that are central to the organization, a check by those considered important but secondary, and a circle by those you consider to be outside the scope of your organization's mission or obligation.
   C. Go back through the list and, for those items that represent some aspect of your mission, use a scale of 1 to 10 to rate how effectively your agency is meeting the goal or need (10 is highest).

II. Share your conclusions with other participants and try to arrive at some consensus about organizational goals and degree of effectiveness in meeting these goals. You may be able to construct a dual listing of the areas in which current programming is most and least effective.

III. Consider the potential of community service activities for helping the organization (or individuals) better accomplish the most important goals by:
   A. Presenting a more focused talk on how some of these things might realistically be outcomes of a service program;
   B. Discussing the possibilities in small groups (either with or without the talk); and
   C. Presenting all or some of the items contained in the list of "Aims and Outcomes of Youth Service Programs" (page 61).

# A CLOSING NOTE: RELATING YOUTH SERVICE TO THE NEEDS OF SOCIETY

The needs of society, like the capacity of youth to help meet these needs, are subject to political definition and ideological interpretation.

In the period from the early sixties to the early seventies the great issues of the day were defined and debated in very concrete and personal terms: the plight of a poverty-stricken child, the personal indignity and injustice of discrimination, the life-threatening pollution of the environment, and the graphically depicted tragedies of war. It was not hard to see how these problems affected real people, individuals, oneself.

Another characteristic of the period, perhaps as a result of the above, was a great outpouring of civic participation by people of all ages and political views. The like had not been seen since the thirties—and perhaps not then. There were not only the historic movements of the streets—the marches, sit-ins, pray-ins, rallies, and vigils—but also widespread involvement of youth in personal acts of service.

*"The farther we move from seeing social needs in concrete, personal terms, the less we are able to acknowledge the need, see what we can do, and feel compelled to act."*

People did not agree on exactly what needed to be done, but they were aware of the issues, and firmly believed that individuals, including youth, had a right, even a duty, to be personally involved in shaping their outcomes.

Many years later, the definitions and the perceptions of society's needs seem somehow more confused or diffused. To the degree that this is true, the causes of such a shift are of great importance to anyone wishing to encourage civic involvement by youth.

"The greatest sin of our age," wrote philosopher Nicholas Berdyahv, "is to make the concrete abstract." In that phrase may lie the basic clue to why volunteer service and other forms of civic participation are more characteristic of some eras than others and of some people than others.

The ability to act, and the inclination to act, are related to how we perceive what's wrong and what needs to be done. The farther we move from seeing social needs in concrete, personal terms, the less we are able to acknowledge the need, see what we can do, and feel compelled to act.

To understand and convey the impact of social needs in concrete human terms is the critical task of every person interested in encouraging civic participation and wishing to empower young people to help others in their communities.

The problem of children in poverty, for instance, offers a clear example of the many levels of entry there are for action by young people. On the first level are the needs of the *children themselves.* Young people may be involved in providing direct services to poor children: acting as a big brother or sister, helping build or repair a neighborhood playground, providing personal attention and enrichment at an understaffed child-care center, teaching first aid and other survival skills, general tutoring, and more.

Youth also may, and do, participate in efforts aimed more directly at *parents and families:* providing relief for stressed parents by offering individual child care or organizing play groups, stocking and staffing food distribution centers, helping scrape deadly leaded paint from nursery walls, or distributing information on available community services.

Young people may, and do, start at a different point entirely by addressing the issue of *adolescent pregnancy:* sharing information and encouraging discussions with younger kids, working as peer counselors in their junior and senior high schools, and volunteering at teen health clinics and

counseling centers.

These activities sometimes are referred to as "band aids," but it seems insensitive to deny offering them on that account. Because a child's cut from broken glass in a deserted lot may be best explained as one event in a causal chain of discriminatory economic policies is no reason to deny immediate cleansing and protection for the wound. The same may be said for offering friendship to the lonely, food for the hungry, and shelter for the homeless.

It may be that some great social reforms have been instigated by armchair philosophers poring over social treatises and statistical tables, but it is hard to think of examples. The examples of people like Frederick Douglass, Mahatma Gandhi, and Martin Luther King come more readily to mind. These reformers first saw and experienced in their own lives the hurt and injustice they strove to eliminate from the lives of others.

Bertrand Russell stated the point most clearly when he wrote:

> *If you love no one in particular, or do justice in no specific instance, your love of mankind and your devotion to justice will be cold and abstract. It is in personal acts and through private affection that love of mankind and devotion to justice become warm and loving.*

The point has not been practiced more forcefully than by Mother Theresa, who once wrote of her work:

> *I know that there are thousands and thousands of poor, but I think of only one at a time . . . . Giving happiness and relief to that person is worth taking trouble.*

This is the great strength of service, its mighty contribution: seeing the needs of society in the loneliness of one man, the sobs of one child. The question is not whether what I do is enough, but whether I do anything at all.

# APPENDIX A

## Needs and Tasks of Adolescence

The following list contains needs and tasks for healthy development of adolescents. These are suggested by leading theorists and practitioners, representing the disciplines of education, social work, psychology, psychoanalysis, sociology, and anthropology. According to these experts, young people should have opportunities to:

- Participate as citizens, as members of a household, as workers, and as responsible members of society (with real power to influence the policies and practices of the groups in which they participate).
- Gain experience in decision making.
- Interact with peers and acquire a sense of belonging (to make friends and to be a friend).
- Reflect on self in relation to others and discover self (own personality and the mysteries and puzzlements which fill it) by looking outward as well as inward.
- Discuss conflicting values and formulate a personal value system and philosophy of life.
- Experiment with their own identity, with relationships to other people, and with ideas; and to try out various roles without having to commit themselves irrevocably.
- Develop a feeling of accountability in the context of a relationship among equals (not just follow orders or comply with rules).
- Cultivate a capacity to enjoy life.
- Develop a sense of self-importance, to know and feel as though they hold significance and possess a special noteworthiness which is unique to them.
- Make a significant contribution.
- Feel they can influence the direction of their own lives and daily events around them and that they are not simply subject to the power of others or the whims of fate.
- Enlarge their horizons by sharing experiences with persons differing in social class, subculture, and age.
- Have real adventure, explore, and take risks—both physical and interpersonal.
- Have productive outlets for their immense physical energy.
- Develop cognitive and non-cognitive skills necessary for economic independence.
- Develop the capability for effective management of their own affairs (including knowing how to find and use help).
- Develop the capacity of engaging in intense, concentrated involvement in an activity, be truly absorbed in something, and experience the fruits of both inspiration and perseverance.
- Discover personal strengths and develop recognized competence and skill at a particular thing or things.
- Develop the capacity to engage in complex, abstract, analytical thinking, and to analyze and draw lessons from their own experiences, not depending on others for ideas.
- Develop the capacity to protect and enhance their physical and emotional health.

# APPENDIX B

## Aims and Outcomes of Youth Service Programs: Benefits to Students

The following outcomes for student participants typically are sought and often—but not inevitably—are achieved in youth service programs.

**Personal Growth and Development**

- Self esteem, sense of personal worth, competence, and confidence
- Self understanding, insight into self
- Self direction, personal motivation
- Independence, autonomy, assertiveness
- Sense of usefulness, of doing something worthwhile
- Personal power, belief in ability to make a difference
- Conscious set of personal values and beliefs
- Openness to new experiences, ability to take risks and accept challenges
- Ability to take responsibility, acknowledge and accept consequences of actions
- Capacity to be productive, persevere even in difficult tasks
- Willingness to explore new identities, unfamiliar roles

**Intellectual Development and Academic Learning**

- Basic academic skills (writing, reading, math, etc.)
- Higher-level thinking skills (critical thinking, problem solving)
- Skills in learning from experience (observing, asking questions, thinking for oneself)
- Skills in particular subject matter (psychology, civics, biology, etc.) as related to experiences
- More positive attitude toward education, learning (possibly, but not necessarily, school itself)
- Communication skills (listening, being articulate in presenting ideas, etc.)
- Tacit learning skills (the nuances that can't be fully explained in a book or lecture but are often the most important things of all to know)

**Social Growth and Development**

- Concern for the welfare of others, a broader circle of people about whom one feels concern and responsibility
- Knowledge and understanding of others
- More positive attitude toward living and working with people of diverse backgrounds
- Skills in caring for others
- Ability to work cooperatively with and to trust others
- Increased likelihood of continuing to be active in the community
- Knowledge of and some experience with service-related career possibilities
- Realistic ideas about the world of work
- Contacts for future job possibilities

# APPENDIX C
## Resources

The following organizations are among those that offer information, publications, and conferences related to youth service, youth participation, and experiential learning.

Association for Experiential Education
CU Box 249
Boulder, CO 80309
(303) 492-1547

Campus Compact: Project for Public and Community Service
Box G
Brown University
Providence, RI 02912
(401) 863-1119

Campus Outreach Opportunity League
810 18th Street, N.W.
Suite 705
Washington, D.C. 20009
(202) 783-8855

Center for Youth Development and Research
University of Minnesota
386 McNeal Hall
1985 Buford Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55108
(612) 624-3700
(also repository of files of National Commission on Resources for Youth)

Community Service Volunteers
(Advisory Service)
237 Pentonville Rd.
London N1
England

Institute for Responsive Education
605 Commonwealth Ave.
Boston, MA 02215
(617) 353-3309

National Alliance for Youth Development
148 S. Victory Blvd.
Burbank, CA 91502
(818) 848-1993

National Institute for Work and Learning
1200 18th St., N.W.
Suite 316
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 887-6800

National Service Secretariat
5140 Sherrier Place, N.W.
Washington, DC 20016
(202) 244-5828

National Society for Internships and Experiential Education
2nd Floor
124 St. Mary's Street
Raleigh, NC 27605
(919) 834-7536

Service America
810 18th St., N.W.
Suite 705
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 783-8855

VISTA/Service Learning Programs
806 Connecticut Ave., NW
Room 1000
Washington, DC 20525
(800) 922-1400

Youth Service Opportunities Project
15 Rutherford Place
New York, NY 10003
(212) 598-0873



62

# APPENDIX D
## References and Related Research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# APPENDIX E

## Sample Administrative Forms

## SAMPLE

### Parental Approval Form

Student's Name _____
Last First Middle

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Nature of Duties _____

_____

Your child is volunteering with _____

Days and hours _____

Method of transportation _____

My son/daughter has my permission to participate in the volunteer program as described above.

Date _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian _____

# SAMPLE
## Volunteer Agreement

SCHOOL/_____

NAME _____ PHONE: HOME_____ WORK_____

AGENCY_____

SUPERVISOR_____ TELEPHONE_____

---

AGREED UPON *DAYS* AND *TIMES* AT PLACEMENT _____

_____

AGREED UPON *TASKS* (What you will be doing there)

WHAT YOU HOPE TO DO IN THE *FUTURE* (Additional tasks, responsibilities)

*PURPOSES AND GOALS* TO BE ACHIEVED (for self, for people you are helping)

*ORIENTATION AND TRAINING* (To gain and improve capacity to do the above)

I agree that the above is an accurate description of the volunteer assignment and that I'll do my best to live up to it. I agree to *NOTIFY MY SUPERVISOR IN ADVANCE* if I must miss my assignment *FOR ANY REASON.*

_____ _____

*Volunteer's Signature* *Supervisor's Signature*

# SAMPLE
## YOUTH VOLUNTEER EVALUATION

NAME OF STUDENT _____ SUPERVISOR AT AGENCY _____

AGENCY _____ NUMBER OF DAYS VOLUNTEERED _____
(Verify from Student Time Card)

DATE _____ CHECK ONE: Keep this evaluation confidential _____
Share evaluation with volunteer _____

INTRODUCTION: Community Involvement offers an alternate learning experience for the student volunteer in which he/she can "try-on" various adult roles while providing vital services for the community. It is our position that youth participation should be a major component of a school district's effort to provide citizenship education because:

- Young people are citizens now, not merely preparing for citizenship;
- As citizens, adolescents can contribute significantly to the welfare of their communities;
- As adolescents, they benefit from the opportunity to participate as citizens;
- Schools can and should facilitate youth participation in community agencies and issues;
- Schools can and should systematically encourage young people to reflect on their youth participation experiences.

Community agencies accepting youth volunteers are sharing in the citizenship education effort and should:

- Provide the volunteer with constructive feedback;
- Provide significant tasks for the volunteer which directly meet the genuine needs of the clients served by the agency;
- Provide both structure and flexibility—give the volunteer a sense of direction while encouraging him/her to be responsive to new situations;
- Provide the volunteer with decision-making opportunities where the outcome matters to someone;
- Encourage the volunteer to reflect on his/her experiences.

EVALUATION DIRECTIONS: We request two evaluations from an informed person at your agency each semester (eighteen week period); one after eight weeks and the second after seventeen weeks. The youth volunteer at your agency will give you the dates for the eighth and seventeenth weeks. Please return evaluations to Hopkins High School Community Involvement Office.

For each of the qualities below, circle a number on the scale which coincides with your estimate of the volunteer's ability or performance. There are thirteen numbers on the scale. An "N" indicates no opportunity to observe the student on that quality: 12 - 10 = superior to excellent performance, 9 - 7 = excellent to above average performance, 6 - 4 = average performance, 3 - 1 = below average performance, 0 = failure to perform at a minimum level.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | ATTENDANCE | 12 11 10 | 9 8 7 6 5 4 | 3 2 1 0 N |
| | | Nearly always attends | Attends most of the time | Inconsistent attendance |
| 2. | ACTION ON ABSENCES | 12 11 10 | 9 8 7 6 5 4 | 3 2 1 0 N |
| | | Always notifies in advance | Notifies after the fact | Fails to notify agency |
| 3. | PRODUCTIVITY | 12 11 10 | 9 8 7 6 5 4 | 3 2 1 0 N |
| | | Perseveres in difficult, even routine tasks | Works well at jobs that interest him/her | Quits at first obstacle |
| 4. | COOPERATION | 12 11 10 | 9 8 7 6 5 4 | 3 2 1 0 N |
| | | Works well with staff and/or supervisor | Works satisfactorily with others | Uncooperative |
| 5. | WILLINGNESS TO LEARN & IMPROVE | 12 11 10 | 9 8 7 6 5 4 | 3 2 1 0 N |
| | | Readily seeks or accepts help when appropriate | Accepts help somewhat grudgingly | Ignores needed help or is overly dependent upon help |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6. | SKILL IN COMMUNICATING WITH STAFF & OTHERS | 12 | 11 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | N |
| | | Outstanding ability to relate to others: listens carefully & speaks clearly | | | | Willingness to try to relate: listens & speaks satisfactorily | | | | | Unable or unwilling to try to relate: doesn't listen, speaks incoherently | | | | |
| 7. | PROBLEM-SOLVING | 12 | 11 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | N |
| | | Imaginative, resourceful in recognizing & solving problems | | | | Satisfactory | | | | | Confused, haphazard in attacking problems | | | | |
| 8. | UNDERSTANDING OF PEOPLE | 12 | 11 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | N |
| | | Clear insights into personal/social problems of people | | | | Some awareness | | | | | Indifferent or unaware | | | | |
| 9. | SELF-MOTIVATION | 12 | 11 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | N |
| | | Is able to function alone & does not need to be told what to do | | | | Satisfactory | | | | | Needs constant supervision, cannot work independently | | | | |
| 10. | CHALLENGE | 12 | 11 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | N |
| | | Enthusiastically seeks out difficult challenging tasks | | | | Prefers safer, less threatening tasks | | | | | Unable or unwilling to do difficult tasks | | | | |
| 11. | SELF UNDERSTANDING | 12 | 11 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | N |
| | | Has accurate sense of own abilities and interests | | | | Accurate in some areas | | | | | Inaccurate sense of abilities-exaggerates or underestimates | | | | |
| 12. | CURIOSITY | 12 | 11 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | N |
| | | Always finds something interesting to do, look at, ask about | | | | Interested in things pointed out to him/her | | | | | Shows no interest in tasks, people or surroundings | | | | |
| 13. | PERFORMANCE | 12 | 11 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | N |
| | | Goes beyond expectations | | | | Does a good job on assigned tasks | | | | | Does less than is asked or able to do | | | | |

The overall opinion of the work done by student:

Excellent _____ Very Good _____ Satisfactory _____ Poor _____ Unsatisfactory _____

Comments:

# SAMPLE
## Atlanta Public Schools
## Community Service Requirement
## Agency Participation Information

NAME OF AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE NO. _____

Type of Volunteer Service needed. Please describe: _____

_____

_____

_____

Number of Volunteers needed _____

Indicate days Volunteers needed: _____

Hours of day Volunteers are needed: From _____ to _____

Person at site who will supervise Volunteers: _____

_____
Signature

_____
Position with agency or organization

_____
Date

. . . . . .

FOR ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS' USE ONLY

Approved as a participating agency or organization in the Atlanta Public Schools Community Service Requirement.

_____
Signature Date

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO: Atlanta Public Schools, Planning and Expanded Services, 2960 Forest Hill Drive, S.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30315



68

# SAMPLE
## Evaluation of Work Site

Name _____ Site _____

INSTRUCTIONS:

The following list describes some possible features of a work experience. Please describe *your* particular experience by circling the appropriate number from 1 to 5.

| | | Practically never | Once in a Great While | Sometimes | Fairly Often | Very Often |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I have enough work to keep me busy. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. | What I do is interesting. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | I find my tasks challenging. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. | I'm given enough training to do my tasks. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. | I do things myself instead of just observing. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. | I have adult responsibilities. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. | I am learning things that will help me in my future employment or education. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. | I am given clear directions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. | I have a variety of tasks to do at the site. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. | Adults at site take a personal interest in me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. | I have freedom to develop and use my own ideas. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. | I feel I am helping people or improving my community. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. | My job is just busy work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. | I think the site is a safe place to work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. | I am appreciated when I do a good job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. | I get help when I need it. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. | I discuss my experiences with my supervisor or co-workers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. | I feel I'm doing a good job at this site. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. | I make important decisions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

My overall rating of my placement(s) at this point is

_____excellent _____good _____fair _____poor _____terrible

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The Task Force on School Curricula and Student Community Service is part of INDEPENDENT SECTOR's Public Information and Education Committee. The work of the Task Force led to the organization of INDEPENDENT SECTOR's Forum on Student Community Service in October 1986, and to publication of this Guidebook. Task Force members are:

**Steven Minter (Chairperson)**
Director
The Cleveland Foundation

**David W. Bahlmann**
National Executive Director
Camp Fire, Inc.

**Donald Eklund**
Vice President
Educational Publishing Division
Association of American Publishers

**Karl Flemke**
President and Chief Executive Officer
Junior Achievement, Inc.

**James Furman**
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

**Sandra T. Gray**
Vice President, Effective Sector Leadership/Management
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District of Columbia Public Schools

**Joseph Podgorski**
Principal
Amherst Central High School (NY)

**Jack Richmond**
Director, Education Relationships
Boy Scouts of America

**Gloria Scott**
Vice President
Clark College

**Scott D. Thomson**
Executive Director
The National Association of Secondary School Principals

**Barbara Yentzer**
Special Assistant for Education & Labor Organizations
National Education Association


71

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1828 L Street, N.W.
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(202) 223-8100